
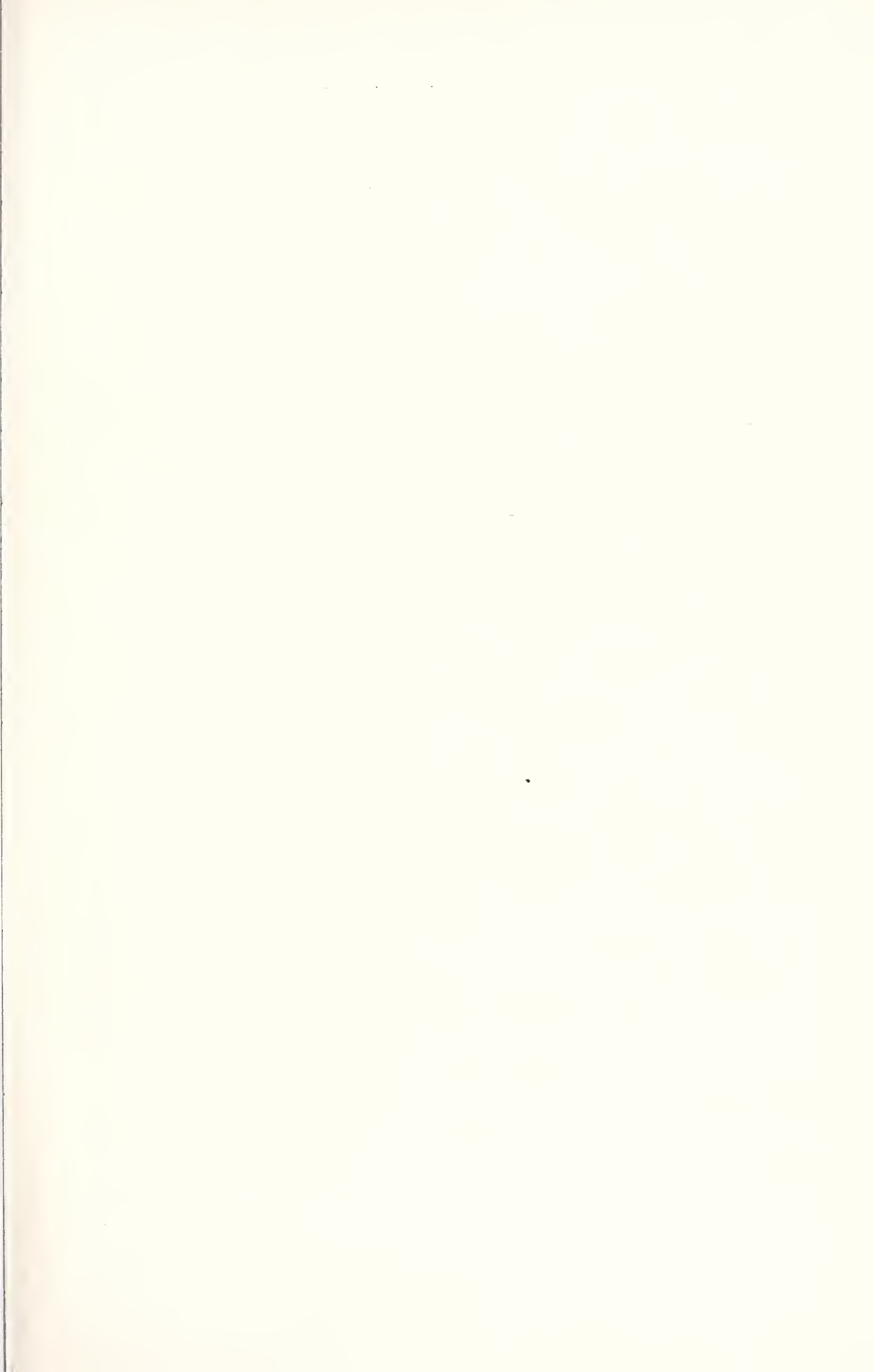




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Studies in Theology.—VI

SIN



BY

RANDOLPH S. FOSTER, D.D., LL.D.

A Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church

ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ



NEW YORK: EATON & MAINS
CINCINNATI: CURTS & JENNINGS

1899

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PREFACE.

A PRIME object of the discussions conducted in this series of volumes, of which this is the sixth, is to furnish the reader, in a condensed form, the best thought of the most learned and able thinkers in the departments of philosophy and theology, and the results of personal investigation carried forward for half a century with honest effort to reach the truth and relieve points of obscurity and difficulty to the ordinary reader and even to the most careful student.

We do not entertain the idea that all difficulties have been relieved or obscurities made plain, but it is our hope that on most points substantial help is rendered, while no subject has been omitted or treated either with unchristian or unscientific carelessness. Some views will be found not in harmony with popular thought or common teaching, the study of which may render help where it is greatly needed.

Of one thing we are entirely certain, that we have aimed simply to correct some glaring errors and to aid in the right understanding of obscure truth, and to lead other minds to continued effort in the right direction.

It is not in our thought to free the reader from the duty of personal effort, or to do his thinking for him, but rather to encourage and help him in his work.

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SIN.

SIN.

ADAM.

THERE is no subject upon which theologians have drawn more largely, not to say exclusively, on the imagination than that of the original state of man. The wild dream of Milton has not simply furnished almost the entire staple of the popular superstition, but also the substance of the grave teachings of the most eminent theologians. They have put forward the merest fables with assurance as well-established verities. A hint, or mere suspicion, has dominated a doctrine. Disregardful of all known or even probable facts, they have enforced a theory woven by fancy. Painters have exhausted their art in painting paradisaical landscapes of the rarest beauty and richest luxuriance—lawns, groves, vistas, long-drawn avenues, lakelets, meandering streams, arranged in the most artistic perspective, flowers, tinted atmospheres suggestive of fragrance, all blending in the picture—and it has been insisted that the reality far transcends the power of description. The happy pair have been represented as gliding about amid these bowers of beauty, themselves the most beautiful objects of all, having a perfect ecstasy of life, without care or trouble. And this dream has been propagated as if there were some real foundation for it. It is as pure a fiction as was ever invented. There is not a sentence in the Bible to warrant it. It is false to all reality as seen in the light of natural laws and to all historic tracings in the works and ways of God. A moment's reflection divests us of the foolish and injurious fancy.

The world where Adam was made and where he commenced

his life was this world as we find it to-day, except not beautified by the touch of cultivation. The paradise where Adam lived was probably somewhere in Central Asia, the land where Bedouins pitch their tents to-day, and in essential respects unchanged. The proof of this is found in the unchanged surface of the land, in the atmosphere, in the climatic conditions, and in the vegetable and animal life which geology shows has prevailed there for ages. There were hailstorms and snowdrifts, floods and earthquakes, plenty and famine, before and after our first parents came.

They were made for this world; for work and toil and care; for an everyday existence, and not for parade. The fiber of their flesh was the same as ours. They needed forethought as we do; had to collect and cook their three-times-a-day meal or go hungry. Why shall we delude ourselves with fancies? That which the history warrants is just this and no more: A man and woman, one to be father and one to be mother, were put upon their feet in a place called a garden, where the means of subsistence were abundant, and were commanded to dress it, and keep it, and get their living out of it. That is the record; nothing more. It is a simple and perfectly natural story. It was in a region long and abundantly inhabited by living creatures. It was a good central point for a race to be planted that was soon to spread over the whole earth. The whole earth, as much as that particular spot, was to be their home. That spot had no special sunshine, no peculiar enchantment. It was simply the earth, for earthly beings; it was not heaven, or a place midway. It will be well to begin the correction of our fabulous fancies right here. So far as we are able to find there is not a hint in revelation that Eden was more beautiful than, or in any respect different from, a thousand places found in pure nature now, and there is no indication in geological phenomena to denote a radical change of the conditions then existing. Man

was there, sin and evil left out for a brief interval—perhaps not more than a day, or possibly only a few hours—just what he is now; had the same wants and needs, and had to be supplied in the same way. Let us not delude ourselves or load revelation with a fancy which is groundless and to which it gives no support.

This being the place, what are we to think of the being? Here, again, imagination has performed the same fantastic tricks, and with as slender materials. Sober common sense brought to the investigation of the history cannot fail to dissipate the glamour thrown around it by mere fancy, but it is difficult to permit common sense to have fair play in competition with sentiments which, however groundless, cling to us, hallowed with a sort of religious sacredness, and which we suppose come to us from the Bible. But if we would preserve those ideas which are true and worthy of respect the attempt at defending and perpetuating mere fables must be abandoned.

There is a truth with respect to that first man. What is it? As to his being, nothing could be more brief and simple than the Bible statement. First, there was a body made out of common earth; second, there was a soul infused or shrined in it. These terms describe humanity as we possess it—that, and nothing more. If we would think justly of the case we bring ourselves to the simple idea of a man like any of us, fitted to live such a life as we live, environed with our wants, under the same laws which apply to us in every particular. He was new, but the world was old and just as we find it. To make his way through it what is necessary for us was necessary for him. He was as like us substantially, sin excepted, as our father whom we laid away yesterday. He did not become so in time, he began so. Hunger and want struck him the first day he lived on earth. He needed clothes and home as much as we do. The same law of labor bound him that binds us.

Now, let us come somewhat nearer to this great stranger who has just been made to be the heir of the world, and study him a little.

As it is with every other man, he stands before us a physical structure—a body. We know what it was made of and what it was like, for it was precisely like ours in every essential particular. It is reasonable to believe that it was as perfect as a body can be, for we do not forget that it was not an accident. God made it. There is every reason to believe that it was well made. It was a good body—healthy, well-proportioned, complete, and perfect in all its members. To suppose otherwise would be to impeach its Maker. Any reason there was for making a body at all was a reason for making it well. But it was a body of earth. This implies a great deal. It was made to dwell on the earth, to encounter its variable and destructive climatic conditions. It was sensitive to the atmospheric changes; hunger would pinch it, a bruise would hurt it, an accidental fall might kill it; it was open to attacks of disease from the subtle poisons which freighted the air; vital processes wasted it. It needed constant care. It is so now, it was so then.

We inherit less healthy bodies; diseases have been contracted and have been transmitted to us. We are degenerate physically, as a rule. But the possibility of this was in his constitution and is incidental to an earthly body, as such, in a world such as the earth is, and as it has been all along the periods of its existence. The common fortunes of humanity were his, its imminent liabilities and necessities. He would grow old, his hair would become gray and his eyes dim, and he would need a staff.

He was to be a father and have offspring. This means the pain of child-bearing to Eve and the increase of care to the provident father. There would have been growing home wants in Eden, and when the children came of age and wandered off

to new countries, as they must, there would have been tearful partings. Life in a body means all this, and more, of toil and weariness.

Now, what shall we say of his soul? That the new creature was endowed with adequate mental power we think there is no just reason to doubt. The end for which he was called into existence, the circumstances in which he was placed, the great responsibility attaching to his actions, the character of the Creator and the manner of all his working, guarantee this. The perfect body was the shrine of a mind of rich and ample endowments. But the endowments were those of faculty—mental powers. There is a relation between body and mind—the relation of instrument and agent. The instrument was good, the agent had complete use of it. His power was adequate and unembarrassed. Before him were the ages. He was to grow in stature and in all the elements of greatness. His mind, equal in endowments to the task, would need to grow and to have time for growth.

If, now, it be asked, What was the degree of knowledge with which he was endowed? we should incline to say, None whatever. Knowledge is acquired, not concreated; an attainment, not a gift. He was able to know. His perfect sensorium was a complex of avenues through which knowledge would pour in upon his perceptive and receptive consciousness. The raw material of sensations was immediately transmuted into ideas and cognitions.

The imagination that he was created with knowledge, or that he knew things in any other way than we know them, is without warrant. He had the faculty of observation, understanding, reason, intuition, imagination, memory, speech, and God was near to inspire and guide him as his need required. So gifted, his duties, as they arose, would become plain to his apprehension, and nature as it passed in detail under his obser-

vation would become subject to his use and convenience. He had everything to learn, but the ravishing lesson would be easily mastered, so far as present need required, by his vigorous and industrious faculties. He was here for discipline and development, and his great lifework was to learn, interpret, and obey his Maker's will, and possess and enjoy the wondrous stores of wealth and blessing spread about him. Each hour and day were to bring him on his journey of discovery and increasing development; to thrill him with new attainments, and refine and exalt his powers of love and knowledge by the contact of fresh beauties and benignities of the earth and sky over-arching and spreading around his home, and by the direct influences of the ever-present Holy Spirit. Thus, ever learning and ever enjoying what he learned, his life was to answer the end for which it was bestowed.

Was he subject to mistakes and errors? We see no reason to doubt that he was. Accurate knowledge is of slow growth. There is no reason for supposing that it is not so with angels as well as with men. He was not an exception. But, if careful and dutiful, he would be saved from fatal mistakes. On moral subjects he had an ever-present Guide, whose voice he would not fail to hear whenever necessary. But by this we do not mean that he was able to solve great moral problems, or knew intuitively ethical laws and principles. The history shows that in these respects he was a child. The code over him consisted of a single command. That means something. He had no knowledge proper of the world: had to find out the time to look for the sun and when to expect its setting; the moon's coming and going; the seasons to plant and to harvest; the means of protection from rigor of weather, heat and cold; the ores and metals, how to make tools and how to use them; what was good for food, and how to capture it and prepare it,—everything. He would doubtless make mistakes; not such as greatly to mar his

happiness or sully his purity, but such as to require his attention and study, put him under the need of exercising careful judgment, and lay him under tribute to the healthful and vigorous use of all his faculties. He was at school, and school means mental training. God, we must believe, was wonderfully near to this inexperienced child of his to help him in matters of real need. It is not given to us to know in what ways and manners—there is an intimation of a visible presence on occasions. There were lessons to be taught for all time that possibly could not otherwise be learned or communicated. The new-made Adam was simply a human soul in a human body, placed on earth to begin a career of eternal improvement with faculty sufficient to commence his journey and pursue it safely to the end. His knowledge to begin with was a point; it would become an ever-lengthening line, a rapidly growing volume, a library. Knowledge would increase from age to age; would become more accurate; would open new fields of discovery; would multiply means of welfare. Paradise would improve.

In matters of duty he had, as we have now, an ever-present inward and infallible monitor to guide him—a divine voice, we may believe—but this implies, not completeness of knowledge, but continuous growth.

Dr. Raymond in his excellent work on *Systematic Theology*, a work throughout distinguished for sound common sense and clear thought, says: * “It is not necessary to indulge a poetic fancy or imagine a superhuman body of gigantic proportions and of angelic beauty. It is sufficient to conceive that man, such as we now find him, enjoyed perfect health and possessed sufficient vigor and strength for all his duties, such as probably many enjoy at some portions of their lives even now. It is not necessary to conceive that hunger and weariness were impossible, nor that wounds would not produce pain, nor that poison

would not produce disease, but that for all such exigencies some preventive or antidote was ever at hand. It is not necessary to conceive that the body was naturally immortal; on the contrary, it may be readily admitted that dissolution is an organic law of animal life, and that therefore man, being an animal, was subject to that law. Being of the dust of the ground, there was a natural, perhaps a necessary, tendency in his body to return to the dust as it was. But perfection in a being destined to immortality forbids the fact of death as man now experiences it.* But for sin death, as a fact in history, would not have entered into the world of human experience. Sin entered the world, and death by sin. How the historical fact of death would have been prevented we are not told, but many infer that the power and providence which preserve man always would have secured perfect health till probation terminated. Providence would have preserved man till the purposes of his earthly life were accomplished, and then, like Enoch and Elijah, he would have been translated—changed in the twinkling of an eye, as it will be with the quick at the last day; he would have put on immortality, and mortality had been swallowed up of life.”

What do the terms “image” and “likeness” signify? The words are synonymous. We see no reason for supposing that they have different shades of meaning or that they refer to different things. They indicate simple conformableness or resemblance—things of like nature or characteristics. The terms are sometimes employed to represent only a similarity of appearance, at other times an actual correspondence. There can be no question that they are employed here in the more radical sense.

*In the main this is a fair statement, but not without some fanciful elements. It is impossible to know whether or not, if man had not sinned, he would have been subject to physical death. It is entirely certain that he was not to remain forever in the organism given him at the time of his creation, or in an organism fashioned as it was. It was made for an earthly life and conditioned by environments that were not designed to be permanent. Nothing is more rationally certain than this. What the change would have been could only be matter of conjecture if not revealed.

The creature was made in the actual likeness of the Creator, and the image was in the thing made, not in its accidents. This fact discountenances the idea that it was, as some have vainly imagined, official resemblance. The dominion assigned to man was an emolument of his nature because he was made in the image of God, but it was not itself the image. The image was *invested in* that which was made, dominion was *conferred upon* that which was made. The image was before the dominion and was the ground of the dominion. The prerogatives of dominion inhere in the created image of God. This will serve to point out in what part of the nature of man the image was. It was in that wherein the powers or qualifications for dominion are found. It was certainly not in the physical or animal nature. The *fashion* of the body was, indeed, noble, not improbably the highest typical and ideal form—the very form which is impressed upon the finite spirit itself; but, however this may be, it is certain that the predicate was not of the form or the essence of the organism, but of the very essence and substance of the spirit. There was nothing in the animal to resemble him to his Maker, neither form, nor essence, nor attribute. There was total want of resemblance. We search in vain here for anything of which the predication can be made. We find but a form of dust, which is not resemblance of the Infinite. The predicate is of the spirit, which is the true man. Here the image is complete. It is the image, not the identity. Image implies neither sameness nor equality. The infant is the image of the man, not his equal. The finite cannot resemble the Infinite in measure; still, there may be likeness. God is a Spirit. Man is a spirit. The essences are identical in nature. The attributes of spirit are power of intellection, volition, emotion. They exist in the divine and in the human. Spirit is free and responsible. It has power of ideality, of reflection, of self-consciousness. It discerns beauty, and truth, and right,

and obligation. It knows and loves with discrimination. It is cause, and detects cause. It has spontaneity of energy and determines its own activity. It is capable of exquisite happiness—happiness from supersensible sources. It formulates thought as history, poetry, science. It has power to express its concepts in words and deeds. It arranges and combines in infinite variety. It creates instruments and ends for itself. It is capable of interminable progress. It is imperishable. These are its characteristics, and in all these respects it differs from all other created things. The gulf of separation is impassable. Herein, in essence and powers, is found the image of God.

There can be no doubt, we think, that the intellectual and ethical nature of man, as invested in a spirit, is that wherein is the divine likeness; that which makes him a child and not a mere creature of God. The child inherits the nature of the Father. The mere creature does not necessarily possess the nature of the Creator. Derivation is not kinship. Man is child and heir. The nature and inheritance both descend to him. As child and heir he was made to be immortal.

He is but a finite image. His nature discovers to us the nature of his Father, but his perfections are not equal in measure. His attributes image those of his Father, but in him they are germs; in his Father they are perfect. Though like God he is not God, nor a part of God, as some have vainly imagined. His spirit was not an emanation or an inflow of the Infinite Spirit, as a drop from a fountain, to return again to the infinite ocean when the vessel which contains it is shattered. It was a created spirit, new and self-contained; destined to continue individual, separate from all other spirits, in its personal essence and independent consciousness, to all eternity. It was forever to know itself as differentiable, and to put forth its own attributes, and accomplish its own history, and come to its own end under its own law and spontaneities.

It was, and knew itself to be, amenable. It was to have a history of its own in which no other could participate, which would forever denote it as a separate and discrete existence; a life and consciousness which could neither be divided nor transferred, nor merged, nor extinguished; a golden thread of continuous and unbroken personal experience that should forever be known by itself as its own, and not another's.

God is a pure, unpicturable Spirit. It is impossible to conceive that he has a form. The Bible declares that he has neither form nor shape. Any likeness to him must be in formless qualities. In these respects it is easy to point out the resemblances between him and his creature, man, and between them alone. The qualities which they possess in common are spiritual qualities. If God be a pure, unpicturable Spirit, so also is man. Man dwells in a body, but he is not a body, but a spirit. They are alike invisible. They manifest themselves, or come to manifestation in the same way, by some external act. They reveal the same qualities, of thought, feeling, will. In each intelligence discerns an end, feeling impels to it, will realizes it. The resemblance is that of parent and child. It is minute and complete in every feature, touching every element of consciousness. There is in each a like sense of the true, the beautiful, the good; like aptitudes for adapting means to ends, like ideas of right and wrong, like moral impulses and feelings of obligation to the good, like pleasures and displeasures, like freedom and self-determining power, like sense of justice and mercy, like grounds of happiness, and like antagonisms. One is infinite, the other is finite and imperfect. Their unlikenesses are simply in the degrees of their qualities or perfections, not in essence or radical. The one is the infinitely perfect Pattern in whom is all fullness. The other is the infant germ which may forever expand toward its infinite Exemplar.

INCLUSIONS OF THE CREATIVE ACT.

SEVERAL questions of importance immediately arise concerning this wonderful being. So far we have seen what he was in the elements of his nature—a spirit created in the image of God, shrined in a body formed of dust of the earth; a compound, or, rather, a union of two differentiable lives. Further on we shall see how those constituent parts were related to each other and the diverse laws governing them, together with the actual results flowing from them. For the present we consider the just-made creature prior to all personal history or action.

What were the inclusions of the creative act? To this we are constrained to answer: Creation imparted being with the attributes inhering, and nothing more; an organized body (sensory system) with its life, and a spirit with its faculties, and nothing more.

The spirit contained in it attributes of personality—power to begin to know and act in all forms of intellections, power to exercise volitional freedom and capacity to feel sense of obligation—and so all the requisite powers to begin a moral history and work out a moral character and destiny. The gift bestowed by the creative act was that of a complete and perfect organism and ethical nature completely endowed for use and development—just that and nothing more. Two sets of laws were corporate in the being: one set, laws necessitating his outgo, so far as he was a thing; the other, laws addressed to his consciousness as a person, to which he was free.

Was he holy? Everything in the answer depends on the meaning we attach to the word “holy.” For want of precision, perhaps, as to the significance of the term, the point has given rise to much confusing disputation.

If by the term we mean innocent, without guilt, Yes. The new-made creature had only what was given him of God; he could not, therefore, have taint of sin. If by the term we mean yet more than freedom from taint of guilt—capacity to know and love God, capacity to know and feel obligation to the right, direct and spontaneous movement of the affections toward God—then still, Yes. We cannot doubt that the double nature of the new-made creature was so adjusted as to make it natural to it to move freely along the course of joyful obedience and worshipful love. As such God approved the work of his own hand—pronounced him good. All that is implied in good, as descriptive of a perfect work, of a most noble nature, he was. But it must be obvious that in all this we are predicating of a creature endowed with power of responsible action, and of his perfect fitness to act aright; that is, we are predicating of a work of God.

If we mean by the word “holy” a quality of a moral being which results from free conformity to the law of right which he perceives to be obligatory, then holiness cannot be concreated, but is a quality of character which results from the free forth-putting of personality. As we view it, a moral nature, however perfect, is different from a moral character, and is the antecedent and indispensable condition of it. It is not the nature which makes the being holy, but the free action of the being toward the law which governs him. By free action we mean, not external action alone, or chiefly, but the free, spontaneous, personal action of the moral affections and of the will, and external acts of conformity to a law either directly and inspirationally revealed, or a law voiced by a perfect and uncorrupted reason and conscience. Holiness is quality of a person, resulting from and determinable by a free conformity to a righteous law. It resides in will as volitionating, or results therefrom. It implies a nature, but it cannot attach to a nature as such, but

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only to a personality after, or concurrently with and consequent upon, action, or forthputting of agency. Even in God, who is the thrice holy One, that which makes him such is his free determination of himself to the good. He is holy, yea, the "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," because he wills holily. Did he will otherwise he would cease to be the Holy One. There is no holiness without this primitive act of the will determining the person to that which is good. The act must be a free and purely personal act. A moral nature can be created, that is, a being who is intelligent, so as to be able to discern between the good and the bad, or right and wrong; a being who can feel the obligation to the good and right, and who has power to determine himself thereto with perfect freedom. Such a being may be created, but the quality of holiness cannot be concreated with his being but must arise from the free determination of himself to the right. The possession of moral attributes by a being constitutes him a moral nature or being, but it does not alone impart to him any moral quality. The preeminence of man over other creatures consists in attributes such that by their use he may acquire moral quality. The nature in the one case is of higher quality than in the other, and its possibilities in kind and degree of excellence are incomparably superior. The one bears the image of God; the other is a mere thing. The attempt to find in the personal moral quality of holy character the image of God, in which man was created, is as inconsistent with the principles and teachings of the Bible as it is impossible of success. There is a close resemblance in the holiness of God and the holiness of man. Holiness or righteousness in both is identical in principle, and the principle shows that it cannot be a concreated quality. It is simply the free self-determination of a being toward that which is cognized as right from the moral conviction that he ought so to determine himself. When a sinful creature is

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renewed, or restored, or brought up to a state of righteousness by the Holy Ghost he becomes in character like his holy Lord and Maker, and it is proper to speak of him as renewed in the image of God. Had he forever obeyed the law of God he would forever have stood in the moral image of his Maker; but the image in which he was created is one of nature and attributes, and one which never was and never can be lost.

The possibility of a created holiness has in it many implicates which it is quite important to notice.

There is no evidence that Adam ever became righteous, or that he ever did one virtuous or holy act; that he resisted a single solicitation to evil is nowhere apparent. The utmost that can be said of him from the record is that he passed from the hands of his Creator a good moral creature, and was approved as such. It is unwarrantable to attach to this account any other meaning than that he was well and properly made. He was good as a moral being, that is, fitted to the ends of moral existence, in the same sense in which other things were good, as adapted to the ends for which they were made. Thus complete Adam was set up for the moral struggle upon which he was immediately to enter, and in which he was to acquire a character of holiness or unholiness as he should observe or violate the law of righteousness imposed upon him. That he obeyed for a single moment a single requirement is not in the history. He soon fell into evil. There was no strong, manly resistance. The great angels may have won their crowns after long and perilous struggles. We employ the word "struggle," not to imply that to an unsinning being the conflict of good and evil has in it all the elements of difficulty that ensue upon a fallen and degenerate condition, but that the winning and maintenance of holy character—which consists in choosing the right against the wrong until holy habit is formed—always implies effort, need of watchfulness, and resistance of alluring temptations.

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Creation imposes a nature; that is, it is an act of Omnipotence by which a being or thing of a particular kind is called into existence. All that it is or can be as a creature the Creator makes it to be, or capable of being, and the terms which adequately describe what it is describe the nature imposed upon it by its Maker, and nothing else. It can neither abrogate itself, nor improve itself, nor in any way change itself, except by use or abuse of powers vested in it. The creative fiat fixes its nature forever, and God only is forever its author and he alone is responsible for it. The only way in which moral quality can be involved with respect to a nature is the moral quality of the act which originates it. The law of any and every nature is nothing but the fixed and unchangeable will of God, which forever determines what it shall be. If the law were changed the change must be in the will of God. He who makes nature is above it, but he only can reverse, alter, suspend, or change any one of his own laws. The nature of a moral creature is no exception. In this respect it does not differ from other beings. Its nature is imposed and can never become anything else. It has no more to do with its nature than a tree, or an animal, or a stone has to do with its nature. It is no more a subject of praise or blame for its nature than these other creatures are, and it never can be. It has no power to become responsible for its nature. Thus it appears that a moral being, while free as to his acts—to the whole matter of determining himself to certain ends in obedience to certain known laws—is, as to his being, under the common law of necessity which dominates all created existence. As to its nature it has no power to renounce itself and become anything else than it is. It is held in the omnipotent grasp of natural law; that is, of a necessitating omnipotent will. So, then, here is a being under two laws: one, as to one part of him, coercive, inviolable, universal, self-executed; another, as to another part

of him, commanded, required, but to the obedience of which he is free and unconstrained, which he may renounce, disobey, transgress: the first the law of things, the second the law for persons; the first natural, the second moral; the first enforced by power, the second commanded; the first the necessity of the being under it, the second the conscious *ought* of the person commanded, but which, however, may be disregarded, and the obedience or disobedience to which, because it must be rendered in freedom, constitutes the righteousness or unrighteousness of the person obliged by it.

It is obvious, from the principles here laid down, that man was a unique creature, and by the constitution he received was ordained to be the artisan of his own destiny—he alone of all earthly creatures having intrusted to him the power to break or keep his law, and so to reap the benefits of obedience or incur the penalties of transgression: in the former case to become good and holy in character, and raise himself to holy happiness; in the latter to constitute himself sinful or evil, and guilty, and come to the miseries of remorse and reprobation.

Two courses were open to him. To one he was commanded, from the other prohibited; to either and alike free. Which, he must determine for himself. The one was enforced by an inward sense of obligation as well as external command. To it his nature was attuned. He was made for it. He spontaneously felt its attraction and obligation. To the other he was allured by temptation. Being ethical in his constitution, he could not but be plied with the sense of the ought and the ought not. He must act in the presence and under the pressure of this sense. His decision, freely rendered but not without influence, determines his character and destiny.

Such was man as he came from the hand of his Maker. It was a great venture, and its future must vindicate its wisdom and justice, not to say its benevolence. The outcome is known

—not fully, but in part. Eternity must be added to time to make the revelation complete. When its fuller light comes much that is for the present in shadow will be cleared up. The result of the hazard was that man broke his law and opened the floodgate of sin, whose dreadful history has darkened the universe. Before we enter upon that sad chapter and attempt to find its meaning let us for a brief space inquire what probably might have been had the free choice been otherwise; that is, had the primal man obeyed the law and made for himself a holy character.

In raising the inquiry we do not forget that the answer must be largely conjectural, but it need not be entirely so. There are grounds for rational inductions, if not for absolute knowledge, both as to what might have been and as to what certainly would not have been. In treating of the actual case there are so many false or unwarranted assumptions frequently introduced, as to what would have been had the case been the reverse, that the question becomes not merely interesting as a matter of speculation, but to some degree important as a practical inquiry.

1. It is often assumed that had the Adam kept his law he would, after a sufficient interval, have been confirmed in holy character, and by reason of his relation to his posterity there would have been born to him a holy seed, who likewise, having had their probation in him, would have inherited his holy character and would have been confirmed in holiness, and so sin would never have become a fact in human history. This is a pure figment of imagination, and not merely without warrant of the word of God but in violent contradiction of its ethical principles, which will admit of no proxies. Under the divine government every soul must account for itself, and its ethical character must be determined by itself. The discussion of this point will emerge when we come to consider, further on, the doctrine of hereditary guilt.

The utmost that is warranted is this: Had the Adam by obedience won a holy character he would, in due process, have acquired permanence of holiness, *through him* sin would not have blighted the world, and had children been born to him they would have inherited an unblighted nature with which to commence their probation. That any one of these would have acted better than he did act there is no warrant for assuming; nothing in the nature of the case, nothing in the teachings and intimations or implications of revelation. If they were born into the inheritance of a moral nature they must meet its conditions and be subject to its perils. That the holy influence of holy parentage and undepraved natures would have modified the conditions of their probation there is no room to doubt, but that it would have prevented them from sinning is what no one can, upon either scriptural or rational grounds, assert. The probabilities are all the other way. The fact that the first of the race sinned under the most favorable circumstances certainly is no assurance that among the millions of his descendants some one might not have fallen, and so have introduced the evil of which he became the first frightful example and source. We will not undertake to conjecture what might have been the possible outcome.

2. It is often assumed that had the Adam won and maintained a holy character he would have remained free from all sufferings of every kind, and his race would have been born into a heritage of complete and perfect happiness not possible henceforth to be forfeited by any.

This, like the figment already noticed, is pure imagination, and, like it, wholly unwarranted either by reason or revelation, and is in violent contradiction of all the probabilities in the case, and, in fact, subversive of all ethical laws. It is even in proof that had the Adam and all the long line of his descendants acquired each for himself a perfectly holy character, and

maintained it permanently, it would not have secured to them unsufferingness or complete happiness during their earthly existence or probationary life.

This imagination—and it is nothing else—rests on the gratuitous assumption that all suffering implies some sin, is penal infliction; that where there is no sin there can be no suffering. Of this there is not a particle of proof. Against it is the solid testimony of all the ages of life and consciousness in the moral and unmoral races. *There is a kind of suffering that is the offspring of sin, but it is a peculiar kind and not inclusive of most forms, though inclusive of the most terrible forms.* This particular subject will be discussed at length in a future chapter.

For the present we dismiss it with the general remark that a life of trial and conflict with temptation, involving self-denial, and a life under the conditions of the animal economy, must necessarily involve the possibility, and actuality, of more or less suffering, both of the affectional and sensational nature. The whole economy must be reversed, or conducted by constant miracle, to suppose it otherwise. We do not, therefore, suppose that innocence included unsufferingness, but only precluded that suffering which is penal or retributive, sufferings inflicted for willful violations of law. Unsufferingness, if it may be reached, which is not certain, belongs to a state following trial, and beyond the realm of animal being.

Would man have been perfectly happy had he not sinned? Suffering is not happiness; it is certainly an abatement of happiness; but it does not necessarily overthrow happiness. It is possible to be happy and at the same time suffer. The un-sinners could not suffer any unhappiness that has sin for its cause. That all forms of mental trial or sufferings of the sympathetic nature, as grief or sorrow, would have been unknown to un-sinners we have not found reason to believe. Some degree of suffering may be not only beneficial as discipline,

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even to the innocent, but be inevitable to finite nature in a period of probation. No one is able to affirm that limitations are not always a form of suffering. It is enough for innocence to claim and possess freedom from the woes of sin, and such bliss as will sweeten whatever of sorrow or trial it may experience, without demanding a happiness which might hardly be consistent with love. Who knows that even angels or God are free from sorrow? Who knows that a condition of the highest possible happiness is not the possession of a nature that may sorrow? Jesus, the Immaculate, wept. All the instincts and sympathies of humanity must be obliterated to extinguish all forms of suffering resulting from his nature in a universe where suffering and sorrow are known to exist. There are forms of suffering of which the sin of the sufferer is not the cause. Suppose a translation, say, of Eve, leaving Adam and her children still in the body. Would it heighten our idea of their nature and character to suppose them insensate to the loss, their affections unpained by the bereavement? This only is reasonable: penal suffering would be unknown in an unsinning universe.

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WHAT IS SIN?

WHAT is sin? that is, what is its essence? There is no term with which we are more familiar. It is not only one of the earliest with which we become acquainted, but it is also one of the most constant in use, even long before we can form any definite idea of it; but while, like most abstract terms, we do not early, or even ever, have a clear and full conception of its full contents, there is no term, perhaps, which conveys a more explicit idea. The common mind has no trouble with it. Theologians and ethical writers in the interests of metaphysical and theological theories have imported into it distracting and confusing elements. Left to the scriptural and common sense use, it is simple and never misleading. The common people understand perfectly what it means; but it has come into such relations to controverted and disputed points, and is otherwise of such importance, that it becomes necessary to the general interests of right thinking, and right action as well, that it should be thoroughly searched, and, if possible, rescued from its present perverted meanings. Perhaps no theological term is in greater need of reexamination. No thoughtful person doubts that it imports something that is real. It is not an idle term, a mere sound, a *mythos*. It designates a reality of the profoundest significance. We feel sure that it will not be even difficult to point out its exact meaning and at the same time to establish its reality and its universality as a fact and a conscious experience of man. It will aid to a clear understanding if we state somewhat carefully what it is not; since it has been applied falsely, and that has been called sin which is not sin and it has been predicated of that which its name does not describe.

Dr. Shedd says: "The intrinsic and innermost characteristic

of sin is its *culpability* or guilt. Guilt is desert of punishment. Sin is damnable and punishable before the moral law. *Consequently sin must be the product of free agency. Necessitated sin is a contradiction.* The primary source of sin, therefore, is the will, because this is the causative and originating faculty of the soul. 'Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their will, fell.' From this inmost center of the soul it passes into the understanding, and through the entire man. The inclinations and affections having become contrary to what they were by creation, the understanding is darkened and the conscience is benumbed." *

This statement could hardly be improved. The last clause points to the depravity which ensues as effect of sin which originates it, and is as to guilt complete, in the act of the will. This is precisely the view herein advocated. He correctly denies that sin is predicable of the understanding or of the sensuous nature. Through the sensuous nature temptation may arise, but sin must emanate from the will. In a very elaborate discussion extending over many pages † Dr. Shedd attempts to show that the first sin consisted in the self-determined inclination to sin; that this act was "voluntary," but not "volitional." The fall, or sin, had, then, really taken place before the sinful act of transgression had taken place. This subject will be more fully treated when we come to consider so-called original sin, but we call attention to it here. "Voluntary," but not "volitional," he explains: "It was will as desire, not will as volition; will as inclining, not will as choosing. The fall was the transition from one form of self-motion to another form of self-motion, and not the beginning of self-motion for the first time. . . . It was inclining away from one ultimate end to another, not choosing between two ultimate ends to neither of which was there any existing inclination. Adam, before he fell, was self-deter-

* *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 162.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 169-189.

mined to God and goodness. Consequently in the garden of Eden he had not to choose either good or evil, as two contraries to both of which his will was *indifferent*. By creation he was positively inclined to good. The question put before him in the probation and temptation was whether he would remain holy, as he was, or begin a new inclination to evil; not whether, having no inclination at all, he would choose either good or evil. His act of apostasy, if it occurred, was to be an act of new and wrong desire in place of the existing holy desire; of new and wrong self-determination in place of the existing and right self-determination. The fall was a change of inclination, not the exertion of a volition."*

He makes a distinction between the desire or inclination—the terms are used interchangeably—to partake of the fruit and the desire to become wise, and excludes sin from the former and predicates it of the latter. This is his language: "The *innocent physical desire* of man's unfallen nature for the tree of knowledge; the rising of *sinful moral desire* for it. 'The woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes.' This denotes merely the correlation between the created qualities of man's physical constitution and this particular product of God's creation. It was not wrong, but perfectly innocent, to perceive that the tree was good for *food*, and to desire it as such, and to be pleasantly affected by the *beauty* of it. This divinely established relation between man's physical nature and the tree of knowledge constituted the subjective basis for the temptation. Had the tree been repulsive to the sight and taste its fruit would not have been employed by Satan as a means of solicitation. . . . But the account in Gen. iii, 6, further adds that the tree of knowledge came to be for Eve a tree 'to be desired, to make one wise.' The sinful moral desire here mentioned is different from the innocent physical desire spoken

* *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 172, 173.

of in the preceding part of the verse. It was a mental hankering after the fruit as imparting *to the eater a kind of knowledge which God had forbidden to man*. This is something new, and different from the innocent craving belonging to man's sensuous nature. To desire the fruit simply as food, and as a beautiful object, was innocent. But to desire a knowledge of good and evil such as the 'gods' had, which the eating of it would communicate, was rebellious and wicked, because this kind of knowledge had been prohibited. . . . The self-willed origination and rising of this desire for a knowledge that God had forbidden was the fall of Eve." *

According to this theory desire is a voluntary act, that is, an act of the will; and sin is predicable of this act. It does not escape, nor does the author desire to escape, from the position that sin originates in the act of the will. But we must dissent from his position that desire is an act of the will, but not a choice of the will. Desire is, indeed, not a choice, and therefore not an act of the will. Desire is a feeling which arises in the soul wholly irrespective of the will; a feeling which is wholly involuntary when an object is presented which for any reason is agreeable. It is simply a feeling awakened by the object. The feeling inclines the person to the object wholly without the will. It moves, or is motive to the will to act, but is not a form of will action. It is an action on the will, but not of the will. It can have no moral quality until it is taken up by the will and results in a free choice or rejection. It draws; the soul feels the drawing because it is its nature to do so. If the discovery be made that the drawing is to an object that is wrong the feeling of the drawing is not itself wrong, for it is involuntary; but if the soul yield to the drawing when it perceives that it is wrong, that is, that the thing proposed is wrong, then sin is committed. It is the free yielding that is sin. The

* *Dogmatic Theology*, pp. 176-178.

desire or inclination is not an act of the will, but the yielding is. The will does not create the desire or inclination to the object. That arises from the constitution of the soul itself—is natural and inevitable. It is the necessary antecedent of moral decision. The soul could not act volitionally without it. The voluntary and the moral actions begin after the desire is awakened, and not until then. The will acts on the desire, accepting it or rejecting it.

This idea runs through all Calvinistic theology from Augustine down, and comes to great prominence in Edwards on Original Sin, and also in his treatment of the Will. It is designed to locate sin in the disposition, or inclination, or desire, back of every volitional act, but to connect it with the will by identifying these states with the will. It is invented for the purpose of making an inherited sinful inclination or disposition to sin sin, and so prove the guilt of all who by nature are sinfully inclined. Edwards makes the inherited sinful disposition the essence of sin. To the view he presents we have the following objections:

First. It teaches that the holy Adam, as he asserts he was, fell into sin by creating in himself an inclination to sin before he committed any sinful act. What does this mean? Can it mean any other thing than this, that he simply determined to do what he was forbidden to do? If so, what was that other thing? Is it that he determined to be inclined or to desire to break the law, created in himself the inclination to disobey? How did he do this—by an act of will, or without an act of will? If by an act of will, was then the act of will his sin, or was the effect of it his sin? He declares that the inclination is voluntary, but is not a choice. What, then, was it? Does the will act without choosing to act? and is such an act sin?

My second objection is to his statement that his sin consisted in the desire to become wise, which desire was forbidden.

I deny that the desire to become wise was the thing forbidden. There is not a hint of that in the account or anywhere in the word of God. The thing forbidden, and the only thing, was the taking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and the eating it. The desire for it was not the thing forbidden. On that subject the law made no deliverance. It was calculated to create desire. It is admitted by Dr. Shedd himself that the desire was innocent and natural, but he brings forward as ground of guilt, not the disobedience to the command, nor the desire of the palate, but the desire for forbidden wisdom. But forbidden wisdom is neither mentioned nor implied in the case. If the desire created by adaptation of the fruit to gratify the palate was innocent, because natural, the desire for knowledge was no less natural. If the physical organism was created with tastes which the fruit would awaken and solicit, the mind was also created with faculties and desires for knowledge.

My third objection is that sin is not predicable of desires simply as such, either before or since the fall, but desires become provocative of sin when they are indulged. "Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his lusts [desires] and enticed, and lust [desire] when it hath conceived [when it has induced consent of the will] bringeth forth sin."

Desire for the forbidden fruit, whether viewed as palatable or as source of knowledge, was natural to Adam, sprang from his physical and mental constitution, and was not forbidden; was innocent. The prohibition was of the indulgence of the desire. The restraint was on taking and eating. The sin was voluntary violation of that law, and that only was sin; and the same is true in every case.

Where there is a law forbidding any act, to refrain from the act is duty, however strong the temptation. The temptation involves no sin, however strong the inducement. If the inducement is absolutely irresistible, compliance involves no sin, since

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impossibilities can never be required. When the will begins to dally with forbidden things, then is the beginning of consent. Any yielding tends to compliance. When sin has been committed the moral nature is depraved, and inclination, or desire, or disposition to continue in sin is born, and tends to permanence. These are the fruits of sin.

Adam's sin was the sin of disobedience to the divine command. It did not consist in his first creating an inclination to it, but it did consist in yielding to solicitation addressed to his physical and moral nature, which moved him with desire; which desire was innocent and natural, but compliance with which was forbidden. The sin was possible, but not necessary. It was a free act, immoral, but not unnatural. By nature and constitution he was temptable, and by power of self-determination he was able either to yield or resist. He yielded and fell. The yielding was his sin. The yielding preceded the external act, and was the determination of the will to commit the external act.

The whole history of the case is as follows: Adam was created with a nature such that, in certain conditions, it would be moved with involuntary feelings of desire and inclination; that is, on occasions objects and courses of possible action would present themselves to him which for one cause or another would awaken inclination or desire in him. These states would arise spontaneously and inevitably by a law of his nature, and without any antecedent or concurrent voluntary action on his part. When such purely involuntary desires or inclinations arose in him he would be moved by them to act, as a will, either favorably or unfavorably with respect to them, freely determining which. The awakened desire, while not subject to his will as to its origin, but arising from his constitution, would not act on him as a necessitating force, constraining his will, but would act on him as a motive to induce a will action on his part, and

would necessitate him to act either for or against, but would leave him free as to which. Suppose Adam had felt the desire but had resisted it because the thing desired was forbidden; would he have been guilty? If not, then the desire was not sin.

But, then, it is said, Is not man born in sin? If by the question is meant, Is not man a sinner as soon as born, or before he was born? we answer unhesitatingly, No. The thing is impossible. No being can be a sinner until he has personally made himself such by a free personal transgression of law.

The discussion upon which we immediately enter will bring under examination all the theories with respect to the state in which man is born.

We sum up the conclusions already reached, and which we hold on the subject of sin:

First. Sin is in every case an act of transgression, and there is no sin possible without an act of transgression.

Second. The transgression which constitutes the person a sinner must be his own personal act.

Third. A person cannot sin except as he is free in his act; that is, able to the opposite.

Fourth. The person cannot sin if the law which he transgresses be not known to him in such measure that he is conscious of wrong in the act committed, or in the determination of himself thereto.

Fifth. The sinful act is completed when the person wills its performance.

Sin is not an entity or substance of any kind, material or immaterial, which is conveyed from one being to another by generation, or in any other way. It has no existence as a thing in itself, as a lump or atom of matter, or as a spirit has. There are substances that are harmful, poisonous, destructive of life, whose touch is death; but sin is not predicable of any such substance, simple or compound, natural or artificial. It is

not a quality or attribute of any substance, as being born with it, or concrete in it by a creative act; is not a product of the power which gives existence to things or posited in things.* No collocation of substance, as such, can produce it. It is not an effect of any natural agent or force inherent in any substance or exerted by any natural agent. Nor is it the quality of any force, or the effect of any force exerted by a natural agent, however deadly or destructive that force may be. It is not a nature or state conferred, or imposed, either by the original act of creation or by propagation. The universe is stored with forces potential of ruin and mischief to life: deadly vapors, noxious poisons, elemental disturbances inherent in the system, storms, earthquakes, and innumerable potencies posited and exerted by the agency which built it. Of none of these can sin be predicated, nor can they be ascribed as effects of sin. Sin is not an inherent of creation, that is, of the universe as created. It has no place in, and can be predicated of nothing of, the original system. It is not a necessitated effect of any force of mind or matter, or the product of any efficient purpose or decree of God. Much is said of inherited sin, of transmitted sin, of sin of nature, of a nature that is sin. The phrases are misleading and incongruous. The world is full of sin, but it consists in none of the things described above.

Sin is predicable of only one being on the earth, and that is man. It is universally predicable of man. There is no man of whom it is not predicable. But, even of man, it is no part of the essence of his being. It is not a quality born in him, or imparted to him by creation. It is an acquisition not by the addition of some foreign substance or infusion. It is not of man by any necessitation of his nature. It is an intruder, and might not have been. There is a long-time popular theologizing and carefully prepared teaching that will not accept some

* See Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 165.

of these negative statements, but their vindication will appear as the discussion progresses.

If sin be not any of the things above described—not a substance, or quality of any substance, or force exerted by any substance, or potency of some kind in any substance; not a nature of some thing, or effect which flows from some natural force of some thing—and if it be something which has reality, and which is predicable of man only, and which is not predicable of something in man as a part of his substance or inherence of his nature, what, then, is it?

We answer to this question: *Sin is something which the individual man does; it is an act. There is no sin where there is not a sinner; and there is no sinner where there is not an act committed by him* which constitutes him a sinner.

By an act we do not mean merely or chiefly an external or physical act, but an internal, personal act, an act of the soul itself, in determining itself by free choice to that which it knows to be in violation of law. The sin consists in this primary act of the will. Any external act of disobedience represents the primary soul act, and derives its heinousness from that. The sin has its essence and complete vileness even before the external act exists, and even, possibly, when it does not exist at all—from want of opportunity or because of physical hindrance. Thus the sin is in every case an act of a free being in determining himself to evil. There is, and can be, no sin when these conditions do not exist.

Webster gives a logical definition which could scarcely be improved. He says: "Sin is the transgression of the law of God; disobedience of the divine command; any violation of God's will, either in purpose or conduct." Even those who, driven by the exigencies of false theologizing, seek to find sin in nature, constantly show and assert that actual sin is willful disobedience. This will appear in further stages of the discussion.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.” *

“All unrighteousness is sin.” †

“Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God given as a rule to the reasonable creature.” ‡

By a reference to Cruden's *Concordance*, in his preliminary remarks on the word sin, and in Knapp's *Theology*, under the heading “Scriptural Terms for Sin,” the reader may find in the most condensed form the various senses in which the word sin occurs in the Scriptures.

We have introduced here three definitions of the term sin: two of them inspired; the other uninspired, but of the highest human authority. Out of these we proceed to raise a more extended discussion of the nature of sin.

According to each of the above definitions, and every conceivable modification of them, sin has essential relations to law. To know what sin is, and when and where to predicate it, it is indispensable that we should know what that law is to which it is related; for how can we find the breach of the law without perceiving the requirement that is broken, the law itself? It is by the comparison of that which is alleged as transgression with the exact law, requirement, transgressed, that the fact of transgression is ascertained. As when there is no law there is no transgression, so when the law is unknown it is impossible to predicate the fact of transgression—the fact of sin.

What, then, is that law of which sin is the transgression?

There is a realm of things, comprising inanimate being and creatures that have life. Pervasive of this realm is an established and necessary order, called the law of nature. Within this domain transgression is impossible. Each creature, under stress of irresistible force, fulfills the law of its existence. Sin cannot, therefore, be transgression of this law. Speaking of

* 1 John iii, 4.

† 1 John v, 17.

‡ *Assembly's Larger Catechism.*

this law, Ullmann tersely says: "This law of nature is not, however, a power acting from without; but it is the nature and constitution of the things themselves making itself irresistibly felt. Therefore here the law is immediately one with its fulfillment; nor can there ever be a contradiction between the two. Hence, also, when apparent deviations from the ordinary course occur, *when dangerous and destructive agencies enter in, we cannot speak of imputation or of guilt in this province, because nature does only what she cannot help doing.*" *

We search in vain in the domain of nature for factual or possible sin, since there is no transgressing power within the sphere of nature.

There is projected upon, and among, things, or the system of nature, a realm of spirits—beings possessed of intelligence and will. Here, as there, law reigns, but it is not the law of force; there is order, but it is not the order of necessity.

Bushnell, in his masterly work, *Nature and the Supernatural*, in the second chapter, with great clearness and marvelous beauty, draws this distinction. In nature the order is that of causation; in the supernatural, or among powers, minds, the order is that of freedom.

Ullmann expresses it so clearly that it could scarcely be improved: "On the basis of the life of nature," he says, "there rises up a moral life—an ethical kingdom within the kingdom of nature. Of necessity an order must reign within this kingdom too. It were folly, indeed, to suppose that that most wonderful cosmical arrangement existed for no other purpose than to serve as a scene over which caprice might bear sway; that preparations so pregnant with design should issue in results void of reason and purpose. But the order to be established here will undoubtedly differ radically from the order of nature. Thus, moral personality (even although situated in the midst

* *Sinlessness of Jesus*, p. 16.

of the course of nature) still possesses a full consciousness that it is not ruled thereby, nor can be, but that it has in it a principle which is determined by a power beyond and above nature. And this principle is free will. The order which rules in this domain is free, like that will itself; it is not established by force." *

The law here, as there, is the expression of the will of the infinite Sovereign and is obligatory, but as duty, and the creature, lifted out of the plane of nature, is endowed with a power of recusancy and disobedience. The ought is upon him, but it is without coercive force. He may transgress this law, and his transgression will be *sin*. At this point, and this only, sin is possible.

"He is not independent of nature in the sense of being separated from it in his action, but he is in it, environed by it, acting through it, partially sovereign over it, always sovereign as regards his self-determination, and only not completely sovereign as regards executing all that he wills in it. In certain parts or departments of the soul itself, such as memory, appetite, passion, attention, imagination, association, disposition, the will-power in him is held in contact, so to speak, with conditions and qualities that are determined partly by laws of cause and effect; for these faculties are partly governed by their own laws, and partly submitted to his governing will by their own laws; so that when he will exercise any control over them, or turn them about to serve his purpose, he can do it, in a qualified sense and degree, by operating through their laws. As far as they are concerned he is pure nature, and he is only a power superior to cause and effect at the particular point of volition where his liberty culminates, and where the administration he is to maintain over his whole nature centers." †

* *Sinlessness of Jesus*, pp. 16, 17.

† Bushnell, *Nature and the Supernatural*, p. 51.

Now, it is not only an interesting but also an important fact that the two realms, of nature and the supernatural, in which the opposite laws of causation and freedom obtain, do not simply lie in immediate neighborhood of each other, but are blended and interwoven; the one interpenetrating the other so that the same creature is partly in the one and partly in the other; in one part of him under the common law of nature—*necessity*, in the other absolutely free and self-determining. Precisely where the line is drawn which defines the domain of the natural and of the supernatural is obviously a most important question, as fixing precisely the sphere of moral law, and so determining the limits within which sin may possibly occur.

Man is a creature possessed of soul and body; or, more properly, man is a soul subsisting in a body and acting in and through it as an instrument. These are separable in idea, and may be conceived of as existing apart. If we suppose the soul absent we have a creature left, a physical organism. In form only it would differ from other mere animals. If it were possible for that part of man to survive in the absence of the soul it would be an animal, pure and simple. Morality could no more be predicated of it than of any other brute. Existing in the plane of natural law, or sheer causation, it becomes wholly irresponsible. So much of our nature, then, must be excluded from the moral sphere; of so much neither sin nor its opposite can be predicated. If we suppose, now, the soul added, at the same moment that we have the real man in the added quantity we have also a new and different kind of being, who, by the possession of certain qualities—intelligence, conscience, and will—passes out from the dominion of causation into the plane of the supernatural, or freedom. We have a creature that rises above the condition of a thing that is under the law of necessity into the dignity of a person that acts from freedom, keeping or breaking law as he wills. The first, or animal part,

being under the law of necessity, cannot transgress; the second part, under the law of freedom, may. Here, then, is the sole sphere of the moral—in the soul. Sin or its opposite, if they exist at all, must be predicated of this part of man—which is, indeed, man; here it must have its seat and throne; and its existence must, also, be found in that which is a result of this being exercising its powers in a free way. That in the soul, even, which exists as a nature, determined by causation, will be as much out of the sphere of moral law as any other nature, since moral law is the law which obtains over a free being in that wherein he is free, and not in that wherein he is under the sway of the law of necessity.

Let us dwell for a little in the consideration of this important point: Precisely what in the soul is to be accounted as under the sway of moral law?

It will aid us here if we keep in mind the radical distinction between natural and moral law; or, at least, precisely what we mean by moral law.

The phrase "moral law" has a well-defined sense. It signifies simply the law of God for the government of free beings in the matters in which they are free. Natural law is that system of order which is ordained for the government of things, and which is enforced by a power *ab extra*. Moral law is that system of order which is ordained for the government of wills, and which is not enforced by power but by moral considerations, and which the free being ought to obey, but may or may not. We are not predicating of the contents of moral law, but of that which makes it moral law—in the absence of which it is not moral law. The source of the two laws in the diverse realms is the same; they differ but in kind. "The plant, the animal, or the star did not choose for itself its law, but received it from that creative Power which gave it being; and it is because that Power is Omnipotence that the laws it has implanted work with

undeviating certainty. The same holds true of man and his order of life, only with this difference, that in his case that order is one of liberty, because it is a moral order."*

"We could not distinguish the moral law from the law of nature, not even in its most general fundamental outlines, without fixing its exclusive relation to *self-determining existences*. Accordingly, no one thinks of applying the notion of the transgression of law to animals; and even to children we cannot apply the notion so long as the will and, therewith, the moral law exist in them only *potentia*, at any rate only in a potential sense. Just as little is one able to violate the moral law if, after the exercise of his conscious self-determination, its constant connection be again entirely broken, though by some *physical cause*. We say by some physical cause, for if it be only the unrestrained power of the lower impulses which have for a moment broken loose the validity of the requirement of the law would not in the least be lessened. For the will ought to be master in its own house, and the vehemence of the lower impulses is just that which ought not to be. But in the presence of the power of natural necessity the imperative of the law has no significance. It severs that connection in insanity, as well as also in cases of fever, although only in its highest stages, when delirium is present. In such conditions the concealed evil of the heart may be revealed, but sin cannot be committed."†

The point raised here is one of very great moment. If moral law relate alone to the conduct of free beings, and if sin consist in its transgression, and that alone, then all sin must consist simply in action. If the idea of moral law be wider, as comprehending states of the soul existing antecedent to action, sin may be predicated when no action is supposed. This is the

* *Sinlessness of Jesus*, p. 24.

† Müller, *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, vol. i, pp. 39, 40.

precise point around which a most exasperated controversy has raged for ages. It is the point to which, more than any other, attention should be given in attempting to solve the most difficult problem in theology. It has never been overlooked by great writers in theology, but alone in the invaluable treatises of Ullmann and Müller has it been allowed its real moment. In the discussion of the several theories of original sin it will recur, but a distinct examination of the point here may aid us.

Those who hold that the moral law is limited to the simple matter of the conduct of free beings in the cases wherein they are free, and is nothing other than an ordination of the divine will prescribing authoritatively what they ought to do or not do, do not understand it to be a rule touching only outward action, or concrete action. They believe, rather, that the law claim penetrates to the innermost sanctuary of personality; that it lays its imperative upon the central power of the soul, the will, and requires that its most primary movements should be according to its commands; that obedience or transgression is complete in the will act, without external expression.

But here they stop, holding it to be impossible to pursue the idea of transgression to a deeper genesis than that of the primary will movement; to find it back in an *antecedent nature*, more primitive than moral action. They do not deny the existence of a back-lying moral nature—even a fallen and degenerate nature—but they deny that a nature, as such, can be a transgressor, or morally culpable, or that a person can be held for the nature in which, without personal agency, he finds himself swathed. They hold that moral law relates wholly to persons, and is exhausted in defining what they must do, or *be* as the result of their doing, and deny that so far as it is their law or imperative it can have any relation to the nature which they receive, logically before, but really together with, personality.

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The person, they hold, cannot be amenable to law until he exists as a person, and so cannot be a transgressor prior to that time, or in the nature which he receives, or any condition of that nature, of which he is in no sense cause; but a nature or being must be supposed as antecedent to personality or contemporaneous with it; and as it is wholly given, without any act of the creature who receives it, it cannot bring with it sin to the passive recipient. Once more, they hold that, as moral law is a law to free beings in the matters in which they are free, it cannot relate to what is given in their nature, as in that they are not free; it supposes them to be free, and under law, before they can be transgressors.

We have seen already by extracts from Ullmann and Müller that this is their view; and yet, as will be seen directly, they seem to contradict this.

The same remark is true of Professor Shedd and the great Edwards, as will appear further on when we come to examine their theories of original sin.

In the following extract it will appear that Ullmann sought a deeper seat of sin than separate acts of the will. He says: "Everything depends on the relation of man to the law and its principle, on the one hand in his inmost affections, and on the other in the sum total of those outward actions which result therefrom. And the relation can, in reality, be only one of two kinds; either it is a relation of self-renunciation and obedience or it is a relation of resistance and disobedience. All good springs from the former, all evil from the latter. But the one as well as the other is a *fundamental fact* of the moral life, which must exist before the separate acts of will and separate deeds of good can in either case take place. In this connection sin is defined as disobedience. The disobedience is not, however, merely in the external action and against the external precept; it is disobedience in the heart and against the whole law, and

it is a *spirit* of disobedience by virtue of an internal opposition to the principle expressed by the moral law." *

The reader, by referring to the pages immediately following those from which we quote in the above work, will find the author's views more fully drawn out. It is obvious that he conceives a sin existing anterior to every separate act of will, in what he calls a more fundamental act of the soul, in its resistance of God—withdrawal from him, and acceptance of selfishness as the law of life.

But it is not less obvious, and is what he by necessity constantly admits, that the sin which antedates each separate act of will was itself an act of the person—the act of renouncing God and enthroning self; an act so fundamental as to be the parent of all after action. He does not escape from his own many-times-repeated position—that sin is an act of recusancy of the will against law, and not a quality of a nature prior to action.

Müller treats this subject exhaustively, and must be read to get any just idea of the vast learning and masterly ability with which he conducts the discussion. He is many times obscure, and by as sluggish minds as the writer of these reflections needs to be read many times and with great patience. If—as he does—Müller finds a sinfulness infecting humanity prior to action, and lying back in the nature itself, it is not, as it seems to be, a contradiction of the teachings already quoted, that all sin is a transgression of law by a will action, since he holds that the sin which attaches to souls when born, and anterior to any act as human persons, is not properly a sin of nature, but a sin which transpired in a former state of existence. Upon this ground alone (that of the prior existence of souls) does he allow of sin in the just-born being.

Indeed, if we correctly understand this great author, his labored discussion is intended to set forth the following points:

* *Sinlessness of Jesus*, pp. 22, 23.

First, that moral law is law for the government of moral beings in matters of action—action including in it the idea of primary decisions of the will, all subsequent separate choices, and that state of the soul called disposition, or habitual tendence, which arises from a prior fundamental act of the will. His idea of will is thus expressed: “In the degree in which our spirit is able by conscious self-determination to determine its own condition and its influence over other beings, in so far it is *will*. The mere moment of self-determination does not suffice for the notion of will, for this in a certain sense we must ascribe to unintelligent creatures, to the organic life of nature, by virtue of its development from its own principle. Self-determination only thereby becomes will, by its being a *conscious* determination; that its subject (the subject of self-determination or the self-determining subject) is able previously to present to its mind that which it brings to reality by its self-determination. Accordingly, there is not immediately expressed in that deeper truth of our nature *being* (Sein), that which is, but the *obligation of being* (Seinsollen), that which ought to be, more strictly speaking, an obligation (sollen) which is determined to pass into being, but which, so long as it is in the shape of transition into being, consequently not yet being, does not cease to appear in our consciousness as obligation, as the *rule* of life, as a necessity [imperative] determining our will.” *

“This practical truth, absolutely regulating, and yet not coercing the will, is the *moral law*.” †

These are designed to be strictly scientific statements, and are of value as laying down these fundamental positions: first, that the will is the self-conscious, self-determining power; second, that it presents to the mind beforehand that which it determines to bring into actuality, and so is self-conscious of what it is going to do; third, that the moral law is present with it as

* *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, vol. i, p. 28.

† *Ibid.*, p. 29.

an imperative, imparting the sense of obligation before and during the process of its action. So that, in case of transgression, sin arises as a premeditated violation of the moral law.

I subjoin here a number of definitions intended to be as nearly scientific as possible, and from authors of the most orthodox type, on the particular subject set forth in their definitions:

“1. As to its formal aspect, sin is any want of conformity with or transgression of the law of God. It is anomic unlawfulness.

“2. As to its essential nature, it is moral unlikeness to God—or, rather, the reverse of his likeness.

“3. Its origin is, in every instance, traceable to the criminal apostasy of a nature made in God’s image, and clothed with freedom to continue in that likeness or depart from it.

“4. As to its habitual form, it is a depraved principle in the nature; hostile to all good, and prone to all evil; enmity to God and his law; and delighting in whatever is hateful to him.

“5. In action it is transgression, actively assailing alike the authority of God and the rights of fellow-creatures.”*

“We regard the WILL as the seat of all virtue and vice. . . . The morality in the will begins at the place at which conscience interposes. . . . In short, human virtue consists in the will obeying the conscience as its law appointed by God, and vice consists in the will setting the law of conscience aside and preferring some other good to what conscience declares to be the morally good.”†

“We would now affirm the all-important principle that nothing is moral or immoral which is not voluntary. We have often been struck with writers upon moral science, in that, even

* *Elohim Revealed*, p. 259.

† McCosh, *Divine Government*, pp. 309, 310.

though professing a view or an argument altogether elementary, they seldom come formally or ostensibly forth with this principle." "We think it for the advantage of our own subject that it should receive a different treatment; that it should be announced, and with somewhat of the pomp and circumstance, too, of a first principle, and have the distinction given to it, not of a tacit, but of a proclaimed, axiom in moral science." This passage from Chalmers is quoted by McCosh as his own view.*

"By sin either that condition of the nature of a man, from which, as from a constant source, the actual opposition of his life to the divine law proceeds; or, we understand by it, this opposition to the divine law itself. The former of these is habitual sinfulness, the latter actual sin. In life the two are inseparably connected; habitual sinfulness expresses itself in actual sin; actual sin springs from habitual sinfulness, consequently for both state and act we use a common expression." †

"*This subjective moment is immediately given in the very nature of sin. But it characterizes as sin whatever in the life of a self-determining being is found contradictory to the moral law, without troubling itself as to the origin of such an element in the individual, or about its particular relation to the moral consciousness of its subject, or the stage of its development and degree of its momentary activity. . . .*

"In order, however, to determine more fully *the relation of evil to the moral law* we have still a threefold question to answer. First of all, is *everything which is evil* really a violation of the moral law? or, strictly speaking, does the moral law merely regulate the *conduct*, and not the *disposition*, the abiding state of the inner life in general? In the second place, is evil only that which *opposes* the law, or also that which *does not yet perfectly*

* *Divine Government*, p. 310.

† *Sinlessness of Jesus*, p. 45.

correspond to the requirement of the law? And, lastly, is not perhaps the law, and the consciousness of law, much rather the *consequence* of evil than, according to the above determination of its notion, its presupposition? " *

This putting brings the subject before us in complete fullness. Quoting approvingly from Schleiermacher, the author sums his views on the first question in these words: " If the law as moral contains a requirement, the *imperative* form is essentially proper to it, in so far as it addresses itself to the will, in order to its being carried out in the life, and it only becomes a *resolution* of the will, primarily, of course, by *the automatism of the will*. According to this, while the act, which of course cannot here be regarded in a limited external manner, is the primary object of the requirement of law, it follows that everything in the life of man, which essentially springs out of his act, must be its *secondary* object. . . . The law regulates not merely the *conduct* of man, but also his *being*, as it proceeds from the inward *act*, the disposition of his mind, which is always regarded, when rightly conceived of, as essentially possessing a fixed habitual tendency of the will; indeed, the very movements and conditions of the mind, the inclinations and disinclinations of the soul, are regulated by the law, in so far as these are redetermined by the established tendency of the will. And it also, without contradiction, essentially belongs to moral perfection that these inward and abiding elements of life should be harmoniously arranged, which surely no one will wish to find in the mere legality of the individual act as such. If now there is nothing in the notion of law to prevent its being directed to the abiding moral condition, we may quite generally denote it, when regarded according to the purity of its notion, as the *representation of the moral idea* in the imperative form." †

* Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, vol. i, pp. 40, 42, 43.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 44, 45. See also the footnotes of those pages.

The second point raised is, if possible, more important; conducts us to a still deeper deep: Does evil denote that only which positively contradicts the law, or that also which fails to satisfy the full claims of the law?

"The moral law, regarded in its true light, requires of us nothing less than perfection. Is, then, everything which is *less* than this *perfection* required by the law to be regarded as moral evil? If we look at the question generally it is manifestly the same as when we ask, Are the notions *purity from evil* (moral integrity) and *moral perfection* identical? In this we, of course, presuppose that we can only speak of moral integrity in relation to creatures possessing a moral nature. To the mere creatures of nature, as possessed of no moral being, one can just as little ascribe virtue as vice." *

The essence of moral action is that it is an act in the presence of a law known. Hence intelligent beings only are subjects of moral law, and intelligent beings who are able to discern obligation, *oughtness*. Moral action cannot be predicated of an idiot, certainly not more of an infant. Then the conditions of acting against its law ethically do not exist in infancy. That free and fundamental act of responsible choice of its end cannot, during this period of irresponsible life, take place; then it cannot sin. To pretend that an infant can sin in the early stages of infancy is a monstrosity of conception only transcended by the other supposition that it can inherit sin.

A peculiarity of man was, he was put on trial. It was not so with any other terrestrial creature. What precisely do we mean by this? Every creature save man was so constituted and posited that its welfare was not made dependent on itself, on any law which it might obey or disobey. Its nature dominated its end. Man was the solitary exception to this rule. It was possible to him to miss his end. It is an interesting fact that

* Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, vol. i, p. 58.

the deepest and truest moment of sin is "missing the mark." Whether he should reach it was made absolutely to depend upon himself. The event was suspended upon his own *free* act. He was put on trial under a definite test. Weal or woe, in the deepest and highest significance, was put in his power. Which should be, in the event, an act of his was to determine. The period of the trial is denoted probation, a time in which and by which the eternal issue was to be determined. The issue of destiny was suspended on personal character. Man was thus alone the maker of his own fate. It was a trial determinative of character and consequent destiny—perhaps nothing more. Failure would deprive him of innocence, separate him from the communion of God, subject him to utter and remediless death, would drive him from the bliss and happiness of Eden, and send him forth, an outcast from God, to a gloomy immortality. Fidelity would ennoble innocence into holiness, and make him an immortal heir of riches of glory immeasurable and inconceivable. It was a vast issue, and himself was, by a free act, to determine it. It is appalling to think of the responsibility.

Fundamental to man as a moral being is that great peculiarity of his nature that he is, so far forth as he is moral, endowed with absolute freedom. This freedom resides alone in his will. Morality, therefore, can be predicated only of his will, and of other things in him so far as they are under the government of will. This point is fully elucidated in the portion of this work which treats of sin.

As will is so important a factor, in fact the very center and pivotal point in the moral being, it becomes us to examine it more fully here. What is it precisely that we mean by will, and by absolute freedom of will?

The spirit of man is essentially man; when we predicate of it we predicate of him. Its functions are intellection, sensi-

tivity, will. It knows, it feels, it wills. These are names for discriminated forms of its activity. Under the first form are grouped the powers of knowing, as perception, self-consciousness, intuition, understanding, reason, memory, imagination. Under the second are grouped all forms of feeling, as affections, passions, emotions. The classifications need not be further extended here. This second group of activities depends on the first for the conditions of their existence and expression. The intellect must present an object before feeling can awaken in any form except the purely animal forms. The third group of activities takes the generic name *will*. As the second awaits the action of the first and springs forth unbidden, so the third requires the antecedence of both the first and second as condition of its exercise.

It is of the third that we now treat. What do we mean by will? We have a tolerably definite idea of what we mean by knowing and feeling. Have we as definite an idea of what we mean by will, or willing? It would seem that we should have. There should be no more obscurity in the one case than in the others. The terms describe equally common forms of activity. "I know," "I feel," "I will," are modes of speech employed with equal frequency, and with equal consciousness that we employ them understandingly. There is no more sense of obscurity in the one case than in either of the others.

What we mean by will is the power we find ourselves endowed with of self-determination. The power applies in every case in which we are able to decide what we would do if not restrained by external forces, and its act is the act of deciding. It is a purely subjective power, and its act is always a subjective act. The external effect is not the will act, but result of it. Every intelligent external act is sequent of the previous subjective act, and could not be without it. The primary will act is election, or choice, or decision to an end, the

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determination of the self to an object. The second form of will action is the executive volition, or putting forth of power to effectuate the choice; to possess or do what is decided on. First there is presented an object or end, and it is accepted by the will, that is, determined on; second, the effort, or executive volition, is made to accomplish it. The two acts are differentiable in fact and ordinarily in time, and always logically as antecedent and sequent—never in the reverse order. The moral quality is complete in the first act.

It must not be imagined that there is moral quality in every will act, but only in those which relate to ends which are right or wrong. A man chooses to sit or stand; to eat or abstain; to converse or be silent. These may be right or wrong, or they may be indifferent.

Rightness or wrongness of an action depends on the existence or nonexistence of law concerning it. If commanded by righteous authority it is right, and the opposite is wrong. If not commanded—that is, not required or forbidden—it is indifferent. By law or command is not meant merely verbal rules of action communicated, but all ethical imperatives emanating from the reason and conscience; divine laws revealed in the mind itself and enforced directly by the ethical reason, or sense of oughtness or ought-notness.

In all cases in which there is a law or command, whether directly and supernaturally given or emanating from the ethical reason, the requirement is primarily on the will; and it requires that the subject should choose to obey the command and should in the resulting act obey it, or do what it requires; and obedience or nonobedience renders the subject righteous or sinful.

In order that he may acquire the quality of righteousness or sinfulness he must act as a will under law; and he must be absolutely free in his act—that is, it must be properly his act.

What do we mean by free? There is no point in theology

and metaphysical philosophy about which there has been more debate than this—none of greater practical moment; and yet, we may venture to assert, none of which consciousness more explicitly affirms. There are things with respect to which we know we are not free, and things with respect to which we know we are free. When we so predicate we understand perfectly what we mean. The atom is not free when it moves by attraction. Water is not free when it rises to its level or flows in its channel. The eye is not free when objects are painted on its retina. The nerve of sensation is not free when it feels a blow. The appetite is not free when it covets its object. The mind is not free when it perceives a difference between the beautiful and deformity—when it affirms opposition between right and wrong—when its consciousness asserts that the right ought to be and the wrong not—when it perceives what impinges on its sensory organ, or is conscious of its present thought or feeling. Why, in all these and ten thousand other cases, do we assert the absence of freedom? What is it that we mean? Simply this, that such is the order of nature that these things are necessary; that is, cannot be avoided by the things themselves; they have no power to the opposite; they are under domination of force or power, external or internal; they have no choice or power of choice in the premises.

When we affirm that man is free we mean that in the matters in which he is free, and so far as he is free, he has what these things have not—power over, or election of his end; that is, whenever he acts as a free will, or in freedom, he possesses the power to act, not only as he does, but differently; that there is nothing in his constitution, or the circumstances of the case, or any external power, which dominates his act, but it is freely determined by himself, with the full consciousness that at the instant the determination might have been different.

It is not meant that he is not susceptible of influence or

motive to act. He cannot, indeed, act rationally without motives addressed both to his intellect and affections. This is one characteristic differencing him from other things. They do not feel or perceive motives which influence their decisions, but are acted on as machines. He is addressed, and is conscious of influence, both of reasons and desires, but he is conscious also that when he yields to them he exercises a free and sovereign power, and is, therefore, responsible. It is precisely this fact which makes him a moral being, and which makes it impossible that beings wanting this power should be moral.

It is not implied that every act of will, either as choice or executive volition, is free, but that any act of will that is unfree lacks ethical quality.

The Adam, a moral being, was, as such, placed under law. There can be no doubt that his law was the common law pervasive of all moral being; inclusive of all duty that might arise in the history of his immortal existence.

For his immediate trial, however, it was reduced to a single command, obedience to which would have contained the principle of all obedience, that of implicit submission to righteous authority; disobedience to which, on the other hand, would have contained the germ of all sin, self-will. We accept as literal history the account given by Moses. The case is certainly not clear, but the preponderance of the argument, to our thinking, favors that view. To those who may be curious to extend research on the subject an endless number of writers will be found accessible in any extensive theological library. As the discussion we have to offer will not be affected in either event, whether it is literal or allegorical, we do not deem it useful to pursue the examination. Whether an allegory or a literal statement, it asserts the same fact, that he was law-bound, or under law. Of that there can be no dispute. The nature which he has transmitted to us declares it. In addition to the

natural law, which held him in common with all other beings in its grip of inexorable necessity, he found himself under another law, dictating forms of activity but not forcing them; saying, "Thou shalt." This law held out rewards and penalties to induce obedience, but had no compulsory force. It was so then; it is so now; it has never been otherwise.

It is sometimes asked, Why was the Adam made so as to be subject to temptation and liable to fall? It is equivalent to asking, Why was he made a moral being? since to be a moral being is to be under a law which the subject knows by command internally or externally imparted; a law, therefore, which is consciously freely kept, and may be broken, and to the breach of which he is, or may be, conscious of an inducement or temptation. This point will be fully elaborated when we come to consider specifically the origin of evil.

Whence arose temptation? In the actual case of man it arose through a foreign agency, the devil; he using an innocent creature as the unconscious instrument of his act, if the history is to be interpreted literally. Whether he might have exerted a direct influence upon the soul of the unfallen, or whether he now does on the souls of men, we are not informed. It is probably true that his wiles are always exerted through intermediates. We do not doubt the personality of the tempter in this case, or that there is a spirit of evil in the universe—the devil; a person who, by reason of his bad preeminence, is chief and prince of the powers of darkness. The empire of sin is composed of persons, represented in the Scriptures as a host of evil beings, consolidated under one head of matchless malice—or, if not of greater malice, *primus inter pares*.

There are those who doubt. They are not always unchristian. They understand the many scriptural allusions to be, under the various names, devil, serpent, Satan, etc., to a spirit of

evil, or principle of evil, existing—in or among things—in nature. Sin is a personal thing, and cannot be predicated apart from a personal being. We see no reason why a person, oldest in sin and chiefest in power of mischief, may not be alluded to rather than an abstract principle, and especially since the attributes of personality are constantly ascribed. There are many devils—there is one chief.

But, while we accept the account as literal, we do not for a moment doubt that temptation would have arisen inevitably without a personal tempter, as must have been the case in the first instance of sin. We accept the presence and agency of a personal devil in Eden as a fact, but not at all as a necessary condition to temptation. His presence here, as everywhere, complicates and disturbs; is an impertinence and obtrusion. He was not necessary to the trial progressing in Eden, nor must we regard his presence and the malicious part he acted as determining the sad catastrophe. Man is a social being, and thus one becomes a tempter of another; and, as his trial is to determine that he will not sin under any temptation, from any quarter, it was proper that he should be subject to temptation. This is a sufficient reason for the presence of the tempter in Eden; but the Adam finds no palliation for his act in the presence of Satanic influence. He would have been tempted, and, and we doubt not, have sinned, had no devil slimed the beautiful paradise with his impure presence and speech. The elements of temptation were in the circumstances and nature of the Adam, as of every other being who is on moral trial. The law which lays its command on a free being suggests its own violation, in the conscious power of the subject to disobey. This is especially the case when the matter of the command crosses any inclination of the subject—prohibits what, but for the command, would be for any reason agreeable.

The command laid on the Adam was of this kind, and con-

tained a germ which, of necessity, would breed struggle in his soul. It prohibited the enjoyment of a fruit that was agreeable to his palate, which he could not behold and not covet. He was required to deny himself of that which his nature craved. His desires and his sense of obligation necessarily collided. To feel desire was to be tempted. He could not avoid seeing in the fruit a seeming good, for he was so made that it must appear as a good; it suited his nature—it was an involuntary action—he must desire it. There was no impropriety in the desire, as there is no impropriety in anything that is natural until it comes into collision with law. The law supervenes before there can be sin, and determines what shall be sin. “Where there is no law there is no transgression.”

But, it is said, how could the holy Adam have a desire in contravention of the command or of duty? We answer, The desire was not in contravention of duty. It was not his duty not to desire. Duty has no place as regards an involuntary feeling. The imperative was not, Thou shalt not desire, but, Thou shalt not eat. Duty requires the control of the impulses, not their nonaction or their extinction. The ought of moral law and moral consciousness regards the use of a nature, not its extinction or abrogation; imperates the exercise or restraint of powers, not their being or nonbeing.

But, yet further, it is said, How could the holy Adam yield to desire and act against his conviction of duty? How could the holy become unholy? How could the good tree produce evil fruit? It is the ages-old question, How could sin find entrance into the universe? It is here, and in some way it did arise; otherwise it is eternal. Holding the view that it is not eternal, and not a product of divine creation, but an effect or fact having its origin from previously sinless creatures, we will try to answer the inquiry, How?

The power requisite to constitute a moral being is power of

free action in the presence of its law—command; power to act with or against the command. The subject must be absolutely free in the matter of his will action. If constrained from without it is not he that acts, but the constraining force. If constrained from within, by a necessity of nature, the nature being created by another, the included constraint is imposed by another; it is not he that acts, but the constraining force. The idea of freedom is excluded; we have a necessary agent, and the testimony of all consciousness is that there can be no responsibility—we have not a moral being. Freedom does not imply absence of law, or absence of influence, but power to act either against or with any law or any influence that may exist.

As the law imposed upon moral beings is, by supposition, the most reasonable possible law, and the most righteous possible law, and a law the obeying of which will conduct to the highest possible good—a law, therefore, which, if known as to its working, must make the strongest appeal to the reason, the conscience, and self-interest—if the subject be free he must be able to resist; that is, to act in unreason—against conscience, and against the highest form of self-love.

Now, if, when it is asked, How can or could a holy being act so irrationally, criminally, and ruinously? be meant, What good reason can be assigned for his so acting? we answer, No good reason can be assigned; all the good reasons are against it. This is the case in every sin. There is no good reason for any sin. All the good reasons are against every sin. Sin is the sum and essence of unreason. The meaning of which is, a free moral being may act against the best reason when he ought to act with it; he has the power to do this, and the use of that power is his sin; it is the very essence of his sin that he degrades himself thus; that he turns away from his royal guides to follow and obey mean and base lusts.

Up to a given moment the being is guiltless of sin; he hears

and follows the behests of right reason and conscience. But now another voice clamors to be heard; it is the voice of passion, or self-will; it points to a somewhat which awakens desire. Now there is a conflict. How will it terminate? Will reason decide? Will conscience? Will the right, and highest good? So one would think it ought to be, but it will not. A person will determine as he listeth, and will render no reason but that so he determines. If we attribute his determination to a back-lying nature or disposition which is stronger than reason or conscience, and make it the source of the sin, it is at the same time to deny freedom to the subject and assign sin to a nature, and find its origin thus in God, the Creator of the nature; by implication to give it the most holy origin.

Our conclusion is that sin enters the universe by that act of a sinless or innocent being in which he renounces his allegiance to God. Up to the initiation of the act he is innocent; in the moment of it, and by it, he passes from the unfallen Adam to the guilty and fallen apostate.

Then sin is an act. The view we have taken is certainly in complete harmony with the account given by Moses of the manner in which, as a fact, sin did enter this world. It was an outgrowth of human spontaneity, a product of human will. The tempted Adam yielded when he ought to have resisted; sin was the finished fact.

The conclusion at which we have arrived is of such manifold importance that we must extend the examination still further, and with yet greater care fortify the position.

I judge that, so far as the primary sin is in question, there is perfect agreement that it consisted wholly in an act of the creature, and not at all in a nature. It is, indeed, by those with whom we now reason, insisted that the creature with whom it originated was, until the guilty act, really holy. They admit that out of a holy nature emanated an unholy act, which

act constituted the sin—the whole of the offending—of the creature.

What we aim to show now is that what was true in the primal case is true in every case; that the essence of the primal sin is the essence of every sin; that it is fundamental to it that it should pertain to the free act of a responsible being; that there is no case in which it can be predicated of something which antedates a movement of will, and the will of a person who knows obligation. How it affects nature will appear in future discussions.

It having been shown that the moral law lays its imperative only on the will of man, and indirectly on that which results from the action or guilty nonaction of his will, and not on any part of his person or conduct, which exists independently of his evil act and beyond its control, we are better prepared for the discussion of the point in hand, and we shall soon find that it comes to essential unity with the question disposed of.

Does evil (sin) denote only that which contradicts the law, or that also which fails to satisfy the full claim of the law? Müller discusses the question as if it were this: Does the moral law require the moral perfection of its subject?—giving to the phrase *moral perfection* the significance of the utmost degree of moral excellence as to nature and capacity of the subject—and in this aspect of it answers in substance: If there be no distinction between moral perfection and moral blamelessness, between imperfection and sin, then progress in goodness must involve the gradual casting away of the evil still clinging to the life. Progress from imperfection toward perfection cannot be separated from normal development; and thus it is plain that evil (sin) cannot be predicated of the mere difference between perfection and imperfection, nor of the necessary difference between the ideal and the empirical reality. To the question, From what can any *minus*, any deficiency, in relation to the perfection

demanding by law, arise, save the power of an opposing principle somehow associated with it? he answers: "The necessity for such a *minus*, in the beginning of man's course, arises simply from the fact that realization of moral perfection is a *task* assigned him, the full performance of which, in virtue of his nature, he can only accomplish in successive moments of time. It follows, therefore, as a matter of course, and not on account of sin, that it must be beyond man's power at the outset absolutely to fulfill the demands of the moral law in its entire range, and that this following on after the law is moral *imperfection*, but not *sin*. If it were sin, sin would be the necessary outgo of finite human nature in the state in which it is created. . . . But if there be a moral development which advances, not from evil to good, but from good to better, it is clear that there is a moral integrity or blamelessness distinct from moral perfection, a state which does not perfectly correspond to the ideal and yet does not contradict it, and that the true conception of evil (*sin*) is not that of something which does not wholly come up to the perfection which the law demands, but must be defined as contradiction of the law." *

To this lucid statement he adds, tending to the same objective point, some luminous reflections on the correlative terms *law* and *duty*, in which he shows that moral law is the sum of all requirements upon moral beings along the whole line of their existence, while duty is a determinative moral claim which addresses itself to any person at any given moment.

The sum of which is that the law claims, of each moral being, that he should do, each moment of his existence, the things he ought to do at the moment.

We add, there never can be a moment in the history of any moral being when he ought to do or be anything which he has not the power to do or be unless some former guilty act

* Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, vol. i, pp. 65-67.

deprived him of the power. The moral law lays no claim upon nonexistent power except when power has been criminally destroyed.

The law is the rule of action for a will; duty obliges conformity. Disconformity is sin, whenever and wherever the obligation exists; and that only is sin. The equivalent of this statement is that which was taught by Aquinas and Belarmine long ago: that though the law sets forth the ideal of perfection, yet, when a moral subject endeavors with all his power to fulfill its claims, shortcoming arising from natural weakness or incompetence, not personally superinduced, is not accounted sin—is not sin; failure to reach the ideal of the moral law is sin only, even in the act, when the failure is voluntary; or such that the subject had power to avoid it, or power to achieve perfect conformity.

It is a noteworthy fact that among all authors who have treated of this subject, however they may have differed, there is substantial agreement on these several points, which I will venture to characterize as embodying all that is fundamental:

First, that sin can only be predicated of a person. Second, that it can only be predicated of that pertaining to a person which is in violation of moral law. Third, that specific acts of violation of moral law are sins only when the law is known, or might have been known, and when the person was free in the act. Fourth, that in every case sin involves a volitional act—an act of the will. Fifth, that the moral law imperates duty in such form that it can only be kept or broken by some movement of will. All of which indicates a universal conviction that, however a nature may be involved in sin, it must be in some way in connection with a movement of the will and cannot antedate it; must be a something in which the person sins or is a sinner. The terms are active. Did no act transpire there could be neither sinner nor sin in the universe.

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The Assembly's Catechism, in adding to the revealed definition of sin, if it means to add to it any idea not included in it, is unauthorized. If by "any want of conformity to" it means *any transgression of*, it is sound, but confusing; if it means *something different from*, it is misleading and impertinent. This particular phase of the subject will be considered more at length when we come to discuss the doctrine of so-called original sin. In this connection we will add a few reflections only.

If by disconformity to law be meant a disconformity of the act to the law requirement it is precisely the equivalent of transgression of the law, and is useless. If it means, as most of interpreters insist it does, something in the nature itself, a state or quality of the being himself, given in existence and by no fault of the recipient, we are plunged at once into confusion. What do we mean by disconformity of a nature or being to law? Does it mean that the being or nature in question is abnormal, distorted, perverted, not according to the ideal? that it has lost some primitive quality, or taken on some alien condition? that it fails to meet the end originally purposed for it, and goes, by some inherent fault, to an opposite end? All this is conceivable. And it is conceivable that any such distortion would be displeasing to him whose ideal was thus distorted. But the question is, Would its existence constitute the subject of it a sinner, provided it were a fact that he had nothing to do with its existence? Would the displeasure felt against it, or on account of it, if any displeasure might exist, be the same in kind as that which is felt against a transgression of law in a matter of duty? Could guilt—desert of punishment—be predicated of the one case as of the other? We are quite sure the cases are so extremely dissimilar that their difference in kind must be at once discerned; and that difference marks the one as sin, the other as misfortune.

Each disconformity, it may be, is displeasing. May it not

be further admitted that each stands in the way of the perfect good of its subject, but on entirely different grounds: the one as sin demanding punishment, the other as disorder demanding cure; the one coming home to the subject as guilty cause, the other finding in him a passive recipient of a disabling injury?

Disconformity to law, then, is not the essential idea or element of sin, but *disconformity of a specific kind*; disconformity not of inherited nature, but of voluntary act; disconformity originating with and emanating from the subject of it; disconformity in a matter of duty and obligation; disconformity for the existence of which the subject is responsible, and which may be charged upon him as guilty cause; which cannot, therefore, lie back of a forth-putting of his agency. Did no forth-putting of agency transpire there could neither be sin nor sinner in the universe; nothing of which sin could be predicated, and no person who could be held as a sinner. And the sin in every case is predicable only of the individual agent who acts. Sin is a person's sin, and the person who sins is a sinner; and sin could be predicated of him in no other way, and on no other account, but that he has sinned. Personal agency is absolutely requisite to the existence of sin, and it resides in that agency, in the manner of its exercise, and cannot come into being in any other way.

Is it said, Yes, sin is personal, but it lies in the person anterior to action; in a state of the person out of which his act itself emanates? This point is more strongly put by Professor Shedd than by any other on the side he represents. We shall reach his view in a moment.

Assuming, for the present, that we have made good the position that sin is the product of a person, by the free exercise of his personal agency, let us now endeavor to find the precise point of agency at which it arises, the most primitive point to which it may be traced.

The moral law, of which sin is the transgression, lays its imperative on the subject as to external conduct; that is, it requires him to do or forbear certain external acts; and the command is so broad in this respect as to cover almost all the activities of his life.

Does sin consist in the disconformity of the external act to the command? Is that disconformity the moral transgression of the law? We cannot better answer this question than in the language of Dr. Shedd:

“Suppose we arrest the sinner in the outward act, and fix our attention upon sin in this form, we are immediately compelled, by the operation of our own minds, to let go of this outward act, and to seek for the reality of his sin within him. The outward act, we see in an instant, is but an effect of a cause; and we instinctively turn our eye inward and fasten it upon the cause. The outward act of transgression drives us by the very laws of thought to the person that produced it—to the particular volition that originated it. No mind that thinks at all upon sin can possibly stop with the outward act. Its own rational reflection hurries it away, almost instantaneously, from the blow of the murderer—from the momentary gleam of the knife—to the volition within that strung the muscle and nerved the blow.”

If upon examination it were found that the blow was not intended, even though death was the result of it, we should not find the guilt of murder. We rest not until we find a will directing it with murderous intent. He proceeds:

“But the mind cannot stop here in its search for the essential reality of sin. When we have reached the sphere—the inward sphere—of volitions we have by no means reached the ultimate ground and form of sin. We may suppose that because we have gone beyond the outward act—because we are now within the man—we have found sin in its last form. But we are

mistaken. Closer thinking and, what is still better, a deeper experience will disclose to us a depth in our souls lower than that in which volition occurs, and a form of sin in that depth, and to the very bottom of it, very different from the sin of single volitions."

What that deeper depth is, Dr. Shedd assures us, is a nature underlying volitions. The discussion is exceedingly able, and as it contains much with which we agree, and also much from which we dissent, we must examine it with particularity and in detail, giving him the benefit of his own statements.

Nothing can be more obvious, we think, than that sin finds its germ in the innermost, and most central, act of the will—the very shrine of personality. It consists in the determination of the will to evil, and, though expressed in concrete acts specifically forbidden, it transpires before any concrete act—it may be before any separate volition to a concrete act—in a yet more primitive and all-embracing determination to self, as against God; *but behind the will and its movement we cannot go*. The most primitive moral act possible to a person, it may be, is choice of an end; if it be self he becomes by the choice a sinner; separate will-acts, to definite sins, are but the outgrowth of the more radical primitive choice. If any choose to denominate this more general determination a nature, as Dr. Shedd does, we do not object, except that it confuses.

Dr. Hopkins, in his *Law of Love*, has written luminously on this subject, as he does upon all subjects of which he treats. He is inquiring for the seat of responsibility. A person, he says, is something more than reason and will. We get misty and lose ourselves by always using abstract terms and the names of attributes. A person is a substance, a *being*, that has reason and will. Here we reach an agent, and the true point of responsibility—the man himself. It is the man himself, the person, the self, the ego—the man, whatever you please to

term it—that we hold responsible, and praise or blame. It is this mysterious—mysterious as all things are that are simple—this mysterious and inscrutable person—this self-conscious, thinking, comprehending, electing being—it is the man himself that we approve or disapprove. Constitutional tendencies, desires, affections, have no moral character till he *adopts* them and consents, or elects, that they shall move in a particular direction. After other wise remarks he continues, in substance: “From what has been said we shall readily see what that form of activity is to which responsibility ultimately attaches. It is not volition, regarded simply as an executive act; it is preference. It is that immanent act of preference by which we dispose of ourselves, and on which character depends. It is this that gives set to the current of the soul and determines the character of subsequent specific acts of preference and volition under it. It is an act of will as distinguished from the feelings.”*

Nothing is plainer than that here the doctrine is what we have affirmed: that sin is found in the act of a person, in the choice or election of an end, conceived, in the presence of a sense of obligation, or law, to be wrong. The preference is declared to be an act of will, and not an impulse.

Even Dr. Shedd does not get away from this ground. “In regard to the first point,” he says, “the position taken is that this sinful nature is in the will, and is the product of the will.” This statement is hardly satisfactory to him, so, after much discussion, he returns to it, to explain further:

“In saying, therefore, that the sinful nature of man is a product of his will, we do not mean to teach that it has its origin in the will considered as the faculty of choices, or particular volitions. . . . But it seems to us that we can have a fuller and more adequate idea of the voluntary power in man

* Pp. 66-68, *et al.*

than this comes to. It seems to us that our idea of the human will is by no means exhausted of its contents when we have taken into view merely that ability which a man has to regulate his conduct in a particular instance. It seems to us that we do believe in the existence of a controlling power in the soul that is far more central and profound than the quite superficial faculty by which we regulate the movement of our limbs outwardly, or inwardly summon our energies to the performance of particular acts. It seems to us that by the will is meant a voluntary power that lies at the very center of the soul, and whose movements consist, not so much in choosing or refusing, in reference to particular circumstances, as in *determining the whole man with reference to some great and ultimate end of being*. The characteristic of the will proper, as distinguished from the voluntary faculty, is *determination of the whole being to an ultimate end*, rather than selection of means for attaining that end in a particular case. The difference between the voluntary and volitional powers—between the will proper and the faculty of choices—may be seen by considering a particular instance of the exercise of the latter. Suppose that a man chooses to indulge one of his appetites in a particular instance—the appetite for alcoholic stimulants, for example—and that he actually does gratify it. In this instance he puts forth one single volition, and performs one particular act. By an act of the faculty of choices, of which he is distinctly conscious, and over which he has arbitrary power, he drinks, and gratifies his appetite. But why does he thus choose in this particular instance? In other words, is there not a deeper ground for this single volition? Is not this particular act of the choice determined by a far deeper and preexisting determination of his whole inward being to self as an ultimate end of living? And now, if the will should be widened out and deepened so as to contain this whole inward state of the man—this entire

tendency of the soul to self and sin—is it not plain that it would be a very different mode of power from that which put forth the particular volition? Would not the will as thus conceived cover a far wider surface of the soul, and reach down to a far deeper depth in it, than the faculty of single choices, which covers but a single point on the surface, and never goes below the surface? Would not a faculty comprehensive enough to include the whole man, and sufficiently deep and central to be the origin and basis of a nature, a character, a permanent moral state, be a very different faculty from that volitional power whose activity is merely on the surface, and whose products are single resolutions and transient volitions? . . . The will as thus defined we affirm to be the guilty author of the sinful nature. *Indeed, this sinful nature is nothing more nor less than the state of the will; nothing more nor less than its constant and total determination to self as the ultimate end of being.* This voluntary power, lying at the bottom of the soul as its elementary base, and carrying all the faculties and powers of the man along with it, whenever it moves and wherever it goes, has turned away from God as an ultimate end; and this self-direction—this permanent and entire determination of itself—this state of the will, is the sinful nature of man.

“Here, then, we have a depraved nature, and a depraved nature that is guilt because it is a self-originated nature. Here, then, is the child of wrath. Were this nature created and put into a man, as an intellectual nature or as a particular temperament is put into him, by the Creator of all things, it would not be a responsible and guilty nature nor would man be a child of wrath. . . . It has its origin in the free and responsible use of that voluntary power which God has created and placed in the human soul as its most central, most mysterious, and most hazardous endowment. It is a self-determined nature; that is, a nature originated in a will and by a will.”

These are weighty words, and deserve great consideration. They trace the genesis of sin to precisely the point at which we locate it, the will, and to an action of the will. That this most primitive action is called a nature does not at all change the fact that it is the free act of a free will, and this is all that we contend for. When this most primitive act takes place in the history of individual men or human beings is a point which for the present is not raised. That subject will be fully treated when we come to consider the subject of original sin, so phrased. But it is manifest in this extensive extract that, with all his effort, Shedd himself does not, even when he imputes sin to a nature and calls it a nature, get clear of the admission that it always centers in the will, and consists of an act of the will. We desire here to give great emphasis to the single point that sin, whenever and wherever and however it exists, consists in that movement of will which arrays itself against its law—which determines it to an end other than that to which its law obliges it—which carries the whole personality. Until this act has transpired sin cannot be predicated.

In order to any movement of a will or person, it must be admitted, the person or will must be supposed to exist. Existence is necessarily antecedent to action. It must appear, therefore, that if sin located in a movement of will, a great fundamental act, the person, who necessarily existed antecedently to the act, was then free from sin.

In the case of the Adam before the fall there is no dispute upon this point. In him whatever existed antecedently to that act of his will which constituted him a sinner was normal—those with whom we controvert now say *it was holy*. Then from a holy nature originated the unholy act. Then, in order to account for the unholy act of apostasy, we do not have to seek a cause lying back of will in an unholy nature. This is a most important concession, since it is precisely what we have

contended for, namely, that sin is not predicable of a nature, but of an act of a specific kind.

It accords with *universal* consciousness that we impute to ourselves and to our fellow-men, except idiots and insane persons and infants, blame, in view of *certain* of their acts or nonacts. We reproach them, condemn them, account them deserving of punishment—reproach ourselves, condemn ourselves, and account ourselves worthy of punishment. It accords with the same *universal* consciousness that we do not and cannot experience the same, or similar, feeling toward any other being or thing, animate or inanimate, or even toward ourselves or our fellows, with respect to other of our acts, or with respect to anything in our nature which is born with us. There must be a reason for this, and the universality of the fact must be attributed to a universal and identical cause. No such phenomena could appear in consciousness, invariably and universally, without a common ground. Experimental science, when it discovers invariable sequence, predicates identity of causation or antecedents; identical effect proclaims identical causation. The effect here is an awakened feeling of condemnation of a man because of certain of his acts. Now, what is it in the act, or because of the act, which gives rise to this invariable feeling? Is it that it is harmful, injurious, destructive of good? That this is a part of the ground there can be no question; it must possess this character in order that the feeling of condemnation may be awakened; but, alone, is it a full and adequate explanation? Take a case—murder. Does the imputation of blame depend wholly on the ground that the destruction of human life is injurious? Certainly not, or it must follow in every case in which life is destroyed. But this we find is not the fact. The tiger kills; the earthquake swallows up a city; the storm whelms a fleet; contagion decimates a province. We do not impute blame to any of these, though

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the effect of the destruction of human life is common to them all. It is not, then, solely the fact of a killing, and injury resulting therefrom, which awakens the feeling of blame. We must find some other and additional ground. And what is true in this case is true in every case in which the feeling arises. There is something additional, as cause of the feeling, to the mere harmful effect of the act. The harmful effect may, indeed, be almost wholly obscured in the consciousness; we may not at all know how it injuriously affects any good of being, but for some reason we may suppose that it does before we can condemn it; but this supposition or discovery is not the adequate ground of condemnation. Upon more careful analysis we discover that the feeling of blame is awakened by the knowledge we have of certain unique qualities existing in the perpetrator of the act which give heinousness to it, and draw down blame upon him. What are these conditioning factors?

1. We allege, as a part of the ground of our feeling, he *knew better*. By which we mean to affirm two things: he knew that the act which he did would do harm, and that there was an alternative possible nonact or other act that would not be productive of any or of equal harm.

2. We allege that at the time when he perpetrated the act he knew that it was wrong, that he ought not to do it—or might so have known.

3. We allege that when he did the act he had the consciousness, not only that it was wrong, but that he had the power to refrain from it. The act after it is performed is followed by the corresponding conviction that it was not unavoidable.

4. We allege that in the light of all these knowings, and against all these feelings, prompting to another and better act, he intended to do precisely what he did do, believing it to be wrong, when he was not under constraint of any kind necessitating him, and when he had full liberty to the opposite.

These several factors are essential to intelligent feeling or imputation of blame in any and every case, and as predicable of man, and of *man alone*, constitute the reason why we do, invariably, consciously impute blame to him for *some* of his acts and *not for others*; and why we impute blame to him, and not to other things or beings, when they are cause of similar effects. Any one of them wanting, we are consciously incapable of the feeling that he ought to be blamed.

If these presumed grounds are true we cannot repress the feeling that the blame we impute is *just*; but if we should discover that any one of them is false we should be compelled to revise the feeling. If it should be discovered that the act which we supposed was injurious was, in fact, beneficent; or if we should find that he did not know it to be harmful, supposed it not to be, when, in fact, it was; or if we should ascertain that he did not know the difference between right and wrong, or was incapable of feeling obligation to the right and to refrain from the wrong; or if we should come to know that he really had no power to avoid the act; or if we should be compelled to conclude that he did not intend it as mischievous, or that it was involuntary or forced, we could no more impute blame to him than we can to an earthquake. These are antecedent and conditioning postulates of ethics. The corresponding conditions of praiseworthy action will suggest themselves. The facts of desert and ill desert are conditioned in precisely the same manner, and the same conditions apply to God and the whole retinue of moral existences. Any one of them, from the highest down, would incur blame or deserve praise on precisely the same, and on no other possible, grounds. And not to impute it on these grounds, or to be able to impute it on any other grounds, we should have to be reconstructed.

In this analysis we do not raise the question as to the origin or grounds of right and wrong—the reasons why some

things are right, others wrong; why some things ought and others ought not to be. Doubtless the examination would show that it is a distinction which is grounded in the nature of God, and is, therefore, unchangeable and eternal. We should find that his will is the standard, and that his will is unchangeable as the supreme good; and that right therefore is right because it is that which is in conformity to his will, and the exact measure of the supreme good, and that wrong is wrong because it is disconformity to his will and therefore to the supreme good. That herein is that which makes the eternal distinction of right and wrong. The distinction is made known to us, and the standard in some measure is revealed in our consciousness, either directly or indirectly, so that we are able to try our acts by it, and to say this is right and this is wrong, and so to feel the imperative of the ought and ought not before an act is performed, and condemnation or approval afterward. We find that there is a standard, which applies to the entire circle of our volitional acting, which affects the supreme good whether of thoughts, affections, intentions, or external actions; reaching inward to our hidden motives and choices, and regulating our duties toward God, toward our fellows, and toward ourselves, so that there is no moment of waking consciousness when its imperative is not touching us in some form. There is no man, equipped with a small amount of intelligence, who does not detect the presence of such a standard in him, and who is not in some measure affected by its authority; it is forever trying and condemning or approving us. As a standard of action it reaches inward to the deepest springs of action, and lays its imperative on the will, both as to motives and most primary choices. But, as stated, our aim is not now to ascertain the sources of the distinction of right and wrong, nor yet the extent or authority of the standard, but rather to point out the grounds or conditioning facts which make us impute blame

to ourselves when a wrong act is performed or a right act omitted: in other words, the conditioning grounds of amenability; presuppositions without which we cannot be subjects of the law, and can neither break nor keep it; neither be condemned nor approved by it.

It is a law for the government of wills directly, and of all external acts which emanate from the will or are volitional. The conditions of its possible violation, as we have found, are that we should know the right which it enjoins, that we should discern the obligation, that we should be able to keep it, that any act which seems to violate it should be intentional—an act of choice—and free. Nothing that we can be or do, which does not presuppose these conditions, can make us deserving of its condemnation nor exposed to its penalties, or *vice versa*.

If we are right in these predications blame can only be imputed for a certain kind of volitional activity, under certain conditions, and for effects which emanate therefrom, or for the want of them. In every possible case the imputation of either merit or demerit must respect the will ultimately, as does the law by which the fact of merit or demerit is determined. In no case can we go behind a will-act, as above predicated. This excludes mere nature, and all automatic, instinctive, necessitated, or unintentional actions. For any of these it is impossible to impute blame, except in ignorance or malice. But, it is said, in fact we do affirm blame of depravity, of evil disposition, of impure imagination, of lustful feelings, which are purely involuntary. This is not true, and what it asserts is impossible. We impute blame for the nonrepression, noncorrection, and nonrestraint of evil tendencies which we find in our nature, but not for their existence, unless their existence can be traced directly to our volitional activity—to some wrong use of will, or failure to will. The blame in these cases, as in every other, ultimately comes back to some misuse or nonuse of power.

We may dread an evil distemper, or be disgusted with an incurable natural mischievousness, as we do when it appears in brutes, and may for self-protection destroy them as dangerous. A malicious lunatic or evil-disposed idiot awakens alarm, and we shut him up. But in such cases we do not pretend that they are amenable to the ought; and this not simply because they lack intelligence, but because, lacking the intelligence to know the right, they lack the conditions to responsible action—that is, the power to choose right ends.

Thus it appears that universal consciousness attests both the fact and grounds of our responsibility. The fact is substantially uniform, and is as wide as the race, the only exceptions being instances of idiocy or cases of undeveloped intelligence among adults, and all infants, none of which classes are proper subjects of moral law. This enunciation of universal conscience cannot be unimportant. We cannot feel it to be so. It disturbs us; it breaks in on the quiet of our lives; it points ominously to the future—we find ourselves unable to escape from it or to lay it. It is inexorable; will be appeased only by being regarded. It pushes on past all external actions into the very citadel of the soul, and arraigns our motives and primary determinations. It will have nothing short of an unbroken intention to keep inviolate its demands. It asserts our ability to keep all its requirements, and compels us to blame ourselves for every infraction, on the charge that we know the right, and might have done it. If the charge be true we cannot escape. That it is true will further appear in discussing the doctrine of the will.

A vicious habit obtains in treating of the will, as if it were something apart from the man—something that stood alone, and had a kind of personality of its own. This tends greatly to confusion. As it is the man who knows and feels, so it is the *man* who wills. The three words simply describe forms of

activity which the man exhibits and exerts. When an object passes before him, or when in some way it is brought into certain relations to him, he cognizes it—takes note of its existence. When it becomes an object of cognition it impresses him with some sort of feeling, pleasurable or the reverse; awakens in him admiration, desire, a sense of duty, or the opposite. In the presence of the object some one of these feelings arises. It is the man who cognizes and feels. If the object be one of admiration, he simply admires; if it be one which simply excites disgust, he is disgusted; but if it awaken desire to possess it, or a sense of duty—if it be something which he thinks he ought to have, or which he would like to have, or something which he feels he ought not to have or ought not to do; or if he feel that he would like to have it but ought not, or would like to do it but ought not to—immediately he is brought into new relations to the subject, and commences a new form of action with regard to it, discrete from both the antecedent knowing and feeling. He chooses it, he determines to have or do it, or he refuses it and determines that he will not have or do it. This is called an act of will, or willing—the power exerted in the act is called the will—but it is the *man* who acts, and the word *will* only describes the unique power he exerts. No form of activity is more frequent or better understood. It comes into play almost every waking moment. He is weary of standing—he chooses to sit; he is tired of the house—he chooses to go forth; he wants a book—he chooses to take it; it is the time for church or the theater—he chooses to go; he thinks of a journey—he chooses to make it; he chooses what he will eat, what wear, what business he will pursue, whom he will wed, where he will take up his abode, the color of his coat, the style of his garment, his reading, whether it shall be light or grave, his politics, whether he will support this or that party—in a word, everything he does or does not, his entire life of waking

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consciousness, whatever his business or pursuit, is made up of a continued series of volitions. There is no power in our possession, or exerted by us, which we know better than this—the power to will, to form volitions. Whatever is presented to us, as something to be done, we immediately act with regard to it affirmatively or negatively, or by holding in abeyance for a future decision, and in either case we make a choice. This is the invariable first form of our action, after knowing and feeling, and we denominate it a will action, or willing. But in itself it is incomplete. Following there must be an action executing the determination, or a putting forth of power to do that which we have chosen or decided to do. To this we give the name of an executive volition—and it is always a further projection of the same power that we exerted in forming the determination or choice. The two forms often stand in juxtaposition—the choice to do and the executive act run so close together that they seem to be one; but in fact they are not, since the determination may change before the executive act follows. Many times they are separated by days. The determination is that an act shall be done to-morrow, or next year. When the time comes, if we still adhere to the previous choice, we complete it by the executive volition. This double facet of the will is a generic choice and all the consecutive forth-puttings of power to achieve it. The determination to go on a journey is followed by the executive volitions included in its prosecution to the end, which may be many successive discrete acts. The act may thus be a ruling permanent purpose formed, in conformity to which his life is to be fashioned, which is considered by him final (it may be amended), but while it holds the *voluntas* follows in all the consecutive executive acts which realize it. In both the original purpose and the subsequent forth-puttings it is the man that acts, and the power used is the will. Everyone is conscious of the accordance of this statement

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with his own experience. By will, then, we mean a power which we possess to originate choices and to execute them—or in general, as defined by Dr. Whedon: "*It is that power of the soul (the man) by which it intentionally originates an act or state of being.* Or, more precisely, *will is the power of the soul by which it is the conscious author of an intentional act.*" That we possess such a power, and constantly use it, it is impossible any man should doubt, unless he has acquired the power to doubt his most pronounced consciousness. To doubt the existence of the power is to doubt the existence of a power which he consciously exercises every time he acts as an intelligent being.

We do not yet raise the question of freedom, but seek simply to define a power. The question of freedom in its use will come directly. Whenever the mind, or, rather, the man, is called to act as a will, or volitionally, either in the first form, choosing, or in the second form, executing, he finds himself beleaguered by a variety of feelings which stand in such proximity to his subsequent will-act, and in some sort so resemble it, that they are not always distinguished, though upon careful analysis they are distinct. Want of careful analysis has led to much confusion here. No better illustration of this can be given than is found in the definition of the will by the elder Edwards: "Whatever names we may call the act of the will by—choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, liking, disliking, embracing, rejecting, determining, directing, commanding, forbidding, inclining, or being averse, a being pleased or displeased with—all may be reduced to this of choosing."

Nothing is more plain than that in this passage there is a grouping together of things utterly dissimilar, some of which belong to the will properly but most of which do not. Some describe purely acts of the discriminating faculty, others mere feelings; others state external acts. The analysis is thus made by Dr. Whedon: "Now, of the above terms, in order to a greater

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precision, we may say, 1. Approving, disapproving, coming to a conclusion and deciding [deciding may refer to a will action in the sense of determining to do, but it is properly a concluding of the intellect on the merits of a case, and in such case is not a will-act], belong more properly to the intellective or moral faculty; 2. Liking, disliking, inclining, being averse, being pleased with or displeased with, to the sensitive nature; 3. Choosing, refusing, rejecting, determining, sometimes deciding, to the will; 4. Embracing, directing, commanding, and forbidding, to external acts." Evidently among all these terms the only ones that are properly predicable of the will are those indicated: choosing; refusing—which is simple choice against; rejecting—which is an active determination not to choose in favor; determining—which is a final choice to do or not to do; deciding—when it is a decision to do or not. They severally import the same kind of action in some form, and are the same use of the same power. The executive volition results in embracing, directing, commanding, and forbidding, but the will-act is causal and discrete and lies back of this—in the soul itself.

Misuse has especially been made of the words desire, preference, disposition, inclination, pleasure, which invariably come to view in a certain class of authors when they treat of liberty. It is only necessary to remember that these are predicates of feeling, and not of will. They may be supposed to explain the grounds of an act of will, but can never be identical with it. Dr. Whedon, with his usual discrimination, says:

"Desire, be it ever so intense, never becomes volition but by a distinct *movement* known to consciousness; and no action can follow until volition arises. Desire is uneasy and stimulant; will is decisive, and brings all the mind to acquiescence. Yet volition, like desire, is appetency and preference; it is a conscious free act of fixing a settlement upon its object, to which it brings the unity of the man.

“Will may be distinguished from desire by the following points: 1. Volition is consciously distinct *in nature* from even the culminating desire. It is felt to be *an ACT*—a decisive *movement*—a putting forth of energy. It is a conscious projection, from interior power, of action upon its object. Desire is the flowing forth of appetency for an object; volition is the putting forth of action upon it. 2. Volition and desire *differ in their objects*. Desire is an appetency for some perceived agreeable quality or agreeable thing in its object. The object of the volition is the post-volitional act which it effectuates. 3. We can conceive a being *full of coexisting and contending desires and emotions*, but *without any power of volition*, and so hemmed forever into a circle of passivities. 4. To volition, and not to any other mental operation, belong, as before said, *intention and motive*. This peculiarity alone would be sufficient to distinguish volition as a unique operation and will as a special faculty. 5. There is no mental faculty which our consciousness so identifies with the *self* as the will. When the will governs the appetites or passions we naturally say that the man governs them; when they *govern* the will we say the man is governed by them. 6. The will is alone that power by which *man becomes properly an AGENT* in the world. It is the bridge over which he *passes* in his *active power* to produce effects, according to design, on objects around him. No matter how intense or powerful may be his other feelings or faculties, he could never execute any projects, shape any objects, or *make any history* which he could call intentionally his own, without the faculty of will. 7. Upon will alone primarily rests from above the *weight of moral obligation*. And surely if, of all possible events, volition alone can be the primary object of obligation, it *ceases to be an arrogant or wonderful claim that in volition alone should exist the element of freedom*. The necessitarian allows that in one respect at any rate the event *volition*

is absolutely UNIQUE; it is *sole* and *singular* among things; the freedomist, consequently, only claims for that unique superstructure, *responsibility*, an equivalently unique basis, *freedom*. 8. It is a fact that, while among all thinkers there is a perfect unanimity in attributing necessity to all the other mental operations, there is, to say the least, a very extensive and perpetuated denial of necessity in the volition. *The necessitarian is bound to account for both this unanimity and this dissent.* Here, then, is a distinction, permanent and extensive, between desire and volition. The desire is a mental operation to which all thinkers with perfect unanimity ascribe necessity; the volitions are a mental operation in which all deniers of necessity affirm with an equal unanimity that freedom resides.

"*Inclination* belongs to the feelings, and not so properly either to the intellect or the will. From his perception of an object a man feels *inclined* to choose it. It is the *feelings* that *incline*, and the will remains quiescent until the initiation of the choice. 'A mere inclination to a thing,' says Dr. South, 'is not properly a willing of that thing.'

"The *dispositions* are the *feelings* viewed in relation to any particular object or volition. A man is said to be disposed to an object or act when his feelings are favorable to it; indisposed when they are the reverse.

"A *choice* is always a *volition*, but of a particular kind. It is, namely, a volition by which the agent appropriates to himself *one* of a class of objects or courses of action on account of some perceived comparative preferability in it. I choose, that is, appropriate to myself, one of a lot of apples, because I see it comparatively most eligible or preferable. I choose one of two roads at a fork because I see it comparably the preferable. I choose from among professions that which seems comparatively most eligible. I *choose* God, not I *will* God. I choose virtue, not I *will* virtue. Choice, then, is an appropriative, com-

parative volition; usually, however, including also the external act. By it I *will* one of several things to be mine. To say that I will as I choose is simply to say that one volition is as another volition. Definitions which make a choice not to be a volition are incorrect. In this treatise choice and volition are used interchangeably.

“To *please*, as an intransitive, expresses a volition, and usually signifies to *will authoritatively*. So a deity or an autocrat *pleases* that a thing be thus or so, or he does as he *pleases*. That is, he does as he authoritatively wills, chooses, or determines.

“To *purpose* is to will, to determine, predetermine, or resolve that something shall be willed or done at a future time. I now will or purpose to go to the city to-morrow. A purpose wills or predetermines now that perhaps an immense number of volitions shall take place. A volition thus comprehensive of many volitions, to which they more or less conform, may be called a standard purpose. This comprehensive purpose resolves the mind into a state of permanent determination. A man may act in view of one great life *purpose*.

“The *preference* is a recognition by the *intellect* that a given object or course is, on some account, or upon the whole, rather to be chosen than, or held in some way superior to, another with which it is compared. When a man on some account intellectually *prefers* an object he generally has a feeling of *inclination* to choose it. Nevertheless there may be coexistent with this *preference* an opposing *inclination* on some other account, in favor of which the will may decide. Opposite dispositions and desires may, and often do, coexist in the same mind. Different affections, operations, and forces may exist within the soul and at the same instant fluctuate and struggle for mastery. This agitation might last forever had man, as previously said, no faculty of will. He would be like the

troubled sea that cannot rest. It is by volition that the faculties are brought to unity and settlement.

“Nevertheless to the will also belongs a preferential state. When a volition has resolved the will into a settled purpose that at the proper time it will give a particular volition, or adopt a certain cause or object, then so long the will permanently *prefers* that volition course or object to a diverse.

“The term *indifference* was often used by the old writers on the freedom of the will in a technical sense. In ordinary language it now refers to the feelings as being wholly without inclination for or against an object. But as in the feelings there may be no inclination, so in the will there may be no volition; and until the will chooses, or differentiates, there is an indifference, nondifferentiation, or quiescence. Whatever may be the coexisting and struggling or fluctuating inclinations and preferences, the will does not differentiate until it volitionates, chooses, or wills.

“Consequent upon the interior *volitional* act performed by the will is the external *voluntary* act performed by the body, obeying and executing the imperative volition. Yet it is not the body and the limbs alone which obediently execute the determinations of the interior self through the will. The mind also in its operations, intellectual and emotional, is more or less under the will's control. To trace how complete this partial volitional control over the body or mind is, is not our present purpose.

“The *intention* of an act, volitional or voluntary, objectively, is the result had in view to be produced by the act. This result may be immediate, or more or less remote. Of the same act the intentions may be stated with a great variety. Thus an archer draws his bow. His intention is the discharge of an arrow. That is, such is the immediate result imaged and *intended* in his mind. But, more remotely, his purpose is

that the arrow pierce the body of a stag. Still further remote, there are other and other successive intentions; and it is difficult to ascertain, often, the ultimate intention of an act or volition. For the intention, near, remote, and ultimate, whether accomplished or not, the agent is responsible. For all the legitimately calculable consequences the agent is responsible. How far even for any consequence of a deliberately wicked act an agent may be responsible is debatable, since he who breaks law is fairly warned by his own reason that he indorses disorder, and so makes any disastrous consequence legitimate and responsible.

“Suppose, however, that, without any culpable want of care, the arrow of the archer, missing its aim, is so deflected by some object as to hit and slay his prince. At once it is seen no responsibility for the result accrues. He is irresponsible just because this result was not *intended*; that is, framed in his conception as that which he, as a volitional agent, exerted his power to bring into existence. Though partially an effect by him caused, that result comes upon him as unconceivedly as a lightning flash darting across his path. For the conception unsanctioned by the volition, and for the result unconceived and *unintended*, yet accomplished, there is really no responsibility.

“As the intellect, the emotions, and desires conditionally precede the volition, so we may call these the *prevolitional* conditions. The act of body or mind which follows as a consequent of the volition obeying its power and executing its requirements may therefore be called *postvolitional*; so that the position of the act of will is with great precision identified. The *willing* act is adjectively called *volitional*; the consequent act of body or mind is called *voluntary*. When an athlete strikes a blow his *willing* the blow is a *volitional*, and the physical motion of the arm which obeys and executes his voli-

tion is a *voluntary* act. So that we have the *prevolitional*, the *volitional*, and *postvolitional* or *voluntary* operations as the sum total of all human affections and activities.

“The occasional confounding of the terms volitional and voluntary, and the transfer of the latter from the postvolitional act to the volition itself, is the source of some error and some unintentional sophisms. Thus Dr. Pond, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, says: ‘If we originate our own voluntary exercises we must do it voluntarily or involuntarily. If we do it involuntarily there is nothing gained certainly on the score of freedom. There can be no freedom or voluntariness in an involuntary act of origination more than there is in the beating of the heart. But if we originate our own voluntary exercises voluntarily, this is the same as saying that we originate one voluntary exercise by another, which runs into the same absurdity as before.’ To this we may for the present reply that, as the terms voluntary and involuntary are predicable only of the external actions in reference to the will, the volitions are neither voluntary nor involuntary, but volitional. They are not intrinsically, as free, the product of a previous volition; nor in that does their freedom consist. What their freedom does imply appears in the proper place by our definition.

“The younger Edwards, in his remarks on his father’s *Improvements in Theology*, has the expression, ‘such volitions being, by the very signification of the term itself, voluntary.’ A voluntary volition is impossible. So on the same page he uses the term *spontaneity*, not, evidently, as Webster defines it, to signify *voluntariness*, but as the abstract of volition, *volitionality*.

“When we say that the will wills we really mean that the entire soul, or self, wills. It is the man who wills, and his will is simply his power, or being able, to will. And the free will is really the man free in willing. So it is the man, the

soul, the self, that perceives, feels, and thinks. The faculties are not so many divisions of the soul itself, but rather so many classes of the soul's operations, and the soul viewed as capable of being the subject of them. And as in volition the whole soul is the will, and in thinking the whole soul is the intellect, so it follows that the will is intelligent, and the intelligence is volitional. When, therefore, we speak of will, we speak not of a separate, blind, unintelligent agent, but of the whole intelligent soul engaged in and capable of volitional actions. It is in no way a separate substance or agent."

From all which it appears that of the word will, or in answer to the question, What is will? it must be said that in one facet it is that power which a man possesses by which he originates acts of choice, or by the use of which he chooses, determines, decides, elects the equivalent of choice or choices; and in the other facet it is that by which man originates actions designed to realize the ends of choice—the fountain of efficiency for making real the thing chosen. In the cardinal and most fundamental sense willing is choosing; and, as declared at the outset, it is that which we do, showing that we both possess and use power almost every moment of waking consciousness, and the which is the antecedent subjective act of every objective act, of all the things we do, in the external activity of life, except such as are purely automatic or instinctive. Thus having found what we mean by will, and also willing, we come now to inquire for the conditions of the use or exercise of this power.

A will-act is never originated or executed without something as an end or occasion, existing in the apprehension of the intellect or in the sensibility moving thereto. These states must exist as grounds or conditions of volitional activity, but not as causes. Nothing can be presented to the mind to elicit its will action that has not its possible alternative suggested by it. The emotions of whatever kind which objects awaken in us

are neither originated by the will nor subject directly to it. They are natural and necessitated effects. Objects addressing our reason either through sensation, or reflection, or intuition, necessitate belief or cognition of some kind, as, for example, that they are real or unreal, true or false, or indeterminable, or proper objects of inquiry. These effects are independent of volitional activity. Objects addressing our sensibility excite desire and occasion admiration, wonder, astonishment, or awaken emotions of joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure, hope or fear. Objects addressing the conscience or moral reason originate the sense of duty, of the ought or ought not. These effects are independent of any direct power of will we possess, and do not suppose any volitional activity. We are passive in them, and they are to be attributed to our peculiar constitution. These necessitated effects, however, so soon as they are produced solicit an action of the will, and may make *some* form of volitional activity inevitable. They suggest ends—something to be chosen, or something to be done—which in either case demands an exercise of the will. Thus they are motives or a motive to volitional activity.

Do they necessitate the precise volition which ensues? To this there are two utterly opposing answers. Necessitarians insist that there is a clear and causal connection between the excitant and the precise volition which follows. Freedomists deny this, and assert that an action of the will may be necessitated, but not some particular act; that is, when an object is presented which excites desire, or awakens a sense of duty, it may be inevitable that *some* will-act should take place, either choosing or refusing, obeying or disobeying; but they insist that it may be either this or that, and the determination which of the possible it shall be is in the power of the actor, and not a mere effect of the excitant. In the realm of the will it asserts man is a free cause.

It is so severe a strain on any system to deny freedom that necessitarians are generally solicitous to escape the charge, and every dialectic art is resorted to for that purpose. They claim to be freedomists, and are loud in complaints when the logic of their system is forced upon them. They invent definitions of freedom and fate or necessity, and show that they hold to the one and deny the other, and then declare it a slander and misrepresentation to expose the fallacy and refuse them the benefit of their dexterous use of words. It hence becomes important that the words should be clearly defined. Each word, as applied to different objects, has different shades of meaning, and words require to be expressed in different terms ; but each also has a fundamental sense which will be found in every possible case in which it can be employed. Necessitarianism is used interchangeably with fatalism and determinism. In the ultimate result they mean precisely the same thing—they differ in the method of accounting for events, but in every form the doctrine is that every event that ever has occurred had not only an antecedent cause which made it inevitable, but also the cause was powerless to any other result. Thus inevitability reigns and must forever reign throughout the whole realm of being and events; nothing is, has been, or will be, that might have been otherwise, or that might not have been, and nothing is possible that has not been or will not be. Each immediate antecedent is potent cause of the effect it produces, itself being an effect of a like potent cause, and so on back along an infinite chain, or up to some reigning original fate which locks all in the chain of inevitable sequence; or if not some blind fate, then God, who by the mystery of an eternal decree accomplished the same end. We have said that there are diverse methods of explaining the result, but the result is the same.

The various schemes may be classed as, first, the doctrine of

fatalism, which teaches that all events are determined by a blind necessity. This necessity does not arise from the will of a person, but from a law of sequence dominating God as well as men. Things are as they are, and could not be otherwise.

The second form of the doctrine is the mechanical theory. This is thus defined by Dr. Hodge: "This denies that man is the efficient cause of his own acts. It represents him as passive, or as endowed with no higher form of activity than spontaneity. It avowedly precludes the idea of responsibility. It assumes that the inward state of man, and consequently his acts, are determined by his outward circumstances. This doctrine as connected with the materialism of Hobbes, Hartley, Priestley, Belsham, and especially as fully developed by the French encyclopedists, supposes that from the constitution of our nature some things give us pain, others pleasure; some excite desire, and others aversion; and that this susceptibility of being acted upon is all the activity which belongs to man, who is as purely a piece of living mechanism as the irrational animals. A certain external object produces a corresponding impression on the nerves that is transmitted to the brain, and an answering impulse is sent back to the muscles, or the effect is spent in the brain itself in the form of thought or feeling thereby excited or evolved. The general features of this theory are the same so far as its adherents ignore any distinction between physical and moral necessity, and reject the doctrine of free agency and responsibility, however much they may differ on other points."*

The materialistic fatalist finds absolute necessity reigning in matter—a flow of inevitable sequences. He denies the existence of spirit, and volitional phenomena is only more obscure but in no respect different from the rest. A volition differs

**Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 281.

nothing from a crystallization or secretion—each is a result of the only possible material law, or interaction of physical forces. One effect, the only possible, follows another in endless series. Necessity thus being universal and eternal, no man in a lifetime can take one step less or more than actually is taken, or vary in word or thought or deed any more than a planet or atom could release itself from gravitation. In a word, since the universe began there has not been a single stir of any kind, nor an atom of movement or change, that might not have been, or that might have been in any way different.

We quote further from Dr. Hodge: “A third form of necessity includes all those theories which supersede the efficiency of second causes, by referring all events to the immediate agency of the first cause. This, of course, is done by pantheism in all its forms, whether it merely makes God the soul of the world, and refers all the operations of nature and all the actions of men to his immediate agency, or whether it regards the world itself as God, or whether it makes God the only substance of which nature and mind are the phenomena. According to all these views God is the only agent; all activity is but different modes in which the activity of God manifests itself.

“The theory of occasional causes leads to the same result. According to this doctrine all efficiency is in God. Second causes are only the occasions on which that efficiency is exerted. Although this system allows a real existence to matter and mind, and admits that they are endowed with certain qualities and attributes, yet these are nothing more than susceptibilities or receptivities for the manifestation of divine efficiency. They furnish the occasions for the exercise of the all-pervading power of God. Matter and mind are alike passive; all the changes in the one, and all the appearances of activity in the other, are due to God’s immediate operation.

“Under the same head belongs the doctrine that the agency

of God in the preservation of the world is a continuous creation. This mode of representation is, indeed, often adopted as a figure of speech by orthodox theologians; but if taken literally it implies the absolute inefficiency of second causes. If God creates the outward world at every successive moment he must be the immediate author of all its changes. There is no connection between what precedes and what follows, between antecedent and consequent, cause and effect, but succession in time; and when applied to the inward world the same consequence, of necessity, follows. The soul, at any given moment, exists only in a certain state; if in that state it is created, then the creative energy is the immediate cause of all its feelings, cognitions, and acts. The soul is not an agent; it is only something which God creates in a given form. All continuity of being, all identity, all efficiency, are lost; and the universe of matter and mind become nothing more than the continuous pulsations of the life of God."

To this class belong the so-called advanced scientists of the day. "They are agreed that there is no freedom. A man is what the environment has made him, and his action is a necessary resultant of the forces which play upon him. A man's goodness or badness is entirely beyond his control. The former depends on happy antecedents and on moral physiological action; the latter depends on unhappy antecedents and on abnormal physiological action. There is as much guilt in having a clubfoot as a disposition to murder.

"Nearly allied with the doctrine of continued causation is the 'exercise scheme.' According to this theory the soul is a series of exercises created by God. There is no such thing as the soul, no self, but only certain perceptions which succeed each other with amazing rapidity. Hume denies any real cause. All we know is that these perceptions exist, and exist in succession. Emmons says God creates them. It is, of

course, in vain to speak of the liberty in producing the creative acts of God. If he create our volitions in view of motives they are his acts, and not ours. The difference between this system and pantheism is little more than nominal." *

Now, all these systems are necessitarian; why? Is it not simply because they, alike and equally, but in diverse methods, make it impossible that any event should be introduced into the series, or any event left out, by any power of man, or any other agent below the primal cause? The possibility of something other is precluded; the occurrence of the series is fixed in inevitability. This is necessity, and any theory which insures the same result is of the same essence, however it may differ from these in method; and whatever invalidation comes to these on the ground of necessity or fatalism must invalidate every other which includes the principle. Any system, to escape, must provide for an agency which is able to break in on the series and from itself originate free acts; that is, acts which no causations out of themselves render inevitable. The advocates of the theories named, themselves, admit that they do away with freedom, that the acts of man are absolutely necessitated; and they accept the sequence that man is an irresponsible being. They are so manifestly in violent contravention of all right thinking, of consciousness itself, that their following has been limited to a few speculative minds, and the reasonings and conclusions are so weak and inconsequent that they are innocuous, and may be safely left to perish of their intrinsic impotence. But there is another theory which, despite the brave and persistent denial of its advocates and their resolute and dexterous efforts to rescue it from the odium, we shall be compelled to place in the same category, and which will require a more extended examination. It scarcely need be said we refer to the system known as Augustinian or

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 281.

Calvinian theology. The peculiar exigencies of that system involve the question of freedom directly, and, as we shall be able to show, abolish the possibility of it. Dr. Hodge, from whom we have given such extended extracts, is its latest and most admired and ingenious expounder. If it had been possible to evade the charge his great ability and distinguished polemical skill would have accomplished the task; but, despite all, and notwithstanding the nervous and sensitive aversion to necessitarian schemes and earnest espousal of freedomistic nomenclature everywhere pervading his discussion, it will be found that he has signally failed, and must be written down, from the theology he has devoted his life to teaching, a defender of the odious doctrine of necessity, or *a* doctrine of freedom which differs from necessity only in name. In summing up, at the close of his very able discussion, he says: "The doctrine of free agency, therefore, which underlies the Bible, which is involved in the consciousness of every rational being, and which is assumed and acted on by all men, is at an equal remove on the one hand from physical or mechanical necessity, which precludes the possibility of liberty and responsibility, and, on the other, from the doctrine of contingency, which assumes that an act in order to be free must be uncertain, or that the will is self-determined, acting independently of the reason, conscience, inclination, and feelings. It teaches that a man is a free and responsible agent because he is author of his own acts, and because he is determined to act by nothing out of himself [it will be hard to reconcile this statement with words which we shall soon quote from this author], but by his own views, convictions, inclinations, feelings, and disposition, so that his acts are the true products of the man and really represent or reveal what he is." The profoundest of modern authors admit that this is the true theory of liberty, but some of them, as, for instance, Müller, in his elaborate

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work on "Sin," maintain that, in order to render men justly responsible for the acts which are thus determined by their internal state or character, that state must itself be self-produced. "This doctrine has been sufficiently discussed when treating of original sin. It may, however, be remarked, in conclusion of the present discussion, that the principle assumed is contrary to the common judgment of men. That judgment is that the dispositions and feelings which constitute character derive their morality or immorality from their nature, and not from their origin. Malignity is evil and love is good, whether concreated, innate, acquired, or infused. A malignant being is an evil being, if endowed with reason, whether he was so made or so born. And a benevolent rational being is good, in the universal judgment of men, whether he was so created or so born." * This statement recurs again and again in Dr. Hodge and all other Calvinistic authors. If it mean anything it means that a man may be guilty without his action—that it may come to him by inheritance. We deny. The thing is impossible, and is shown so to be in the discussion of the subject of original sin.

"It is better to abide by the general statement, the will is not determined by any law of necessity; it is not independent, indifferent, or self-determined, but is always determined by the preceding state of mind; so that a man is free so long as his volitions are the conscious expression of his own mind, or so long as his activity is determined and controlled by his reason and feeling."† In another place, defining his own position, he says: "The third general theory on this subject is separated by an equal distance from the doctrine of necessity on the one hand, and from that of contingency on the other. It teaches that a man is free, not only when his outward acts are determined by his will, but when his volitions are truly and

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 307, 308.

† *Ibid.*, p. 288.
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properly his own, determined by nothing out of himself, but proceeding from his own views, feelings, and innermost dispositions, so that they are the real, intelligent, and conscious expression of his character, or of what is in his mind." Again: "When we say that an agent is self-determined we say two things: 1. That he is the author or efficient cause of his own acts. 2. That the grounds or reasons of his determination are within himself. He is determined by what constitutes him at the moment a particular individual, his feelings, principles, character, dispositions; and not by an ab-extra or coercive influence." Again: "It may, however, be remarked that there is no difficulty attending the doctrine of foreordination which does not attach to foreknowledge. The latter supposes the certainty of the acts, and the former secures the certainty. If, then, being certain be consistent with liberty, being rendered certain cannot be incompatible with it. All that foreordination does is to render it certain that free acts shall occur. . . . Foreknowledge supposes certainty; foreordination determines it, and Providence effects it." *

These definitions are carefully drawn to make the offensive doctrine as little objectionable as possible. They might, with slight modification, be adopted by freedomists; but they dexterously hide as pure necessitarianism, as if they had said, in so many words, "Man wills as he wills, and is as powerless to will otherwise as the piston is powerless to resist the steam." In this statement we see the doctrine; in the other it is disguised. This is the thing the system contains, and which its advocates must defend or abandon, and it is neither ingenuous nor loyal to truth to attempt to obscure it and retain it. If it be true, the plainer the statement the better; if it be false, let it not be smuggled into the teaching under false or misleading names.

Several things are noticeable throughout the discussion of

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 281, 295, 301.

this subject by Dr. Hodge: he has profited by former controversies, and with great adroitness seeks to escape the errors of former advocates; his definitions are more cautious; he finds a function for self-determination; he evinces a slightly improved idea of freedom, but after all finds it impossible to escape the maelstrom which has engulfed all his predecessors. His most dexterous feat is the adroit change of the issue between the parties in the controversy. He wages war against several forms of necessitarianism, and by adopting the nomenclature of freedomists, and their general postulates, he seems to be a champion of liberty against necessity; thus at the same time lulling suspicion and winning favor. The real trend of the difficulties of his theological position is smoothed over or avoided. He makes the question in dispute between him and genuine freedomists to be a question about certainty; and then, with spread of learning, proceeds to show that certainty does not interfere with liberty, that certainty is not necessity, that things may be certain and yet free—as if this were the question in dispute. The word contingency, as conspicuously used in the old discussion, gives him his cue. The idea of a possible something different he adroitly makes to mean a total uncertainty of events, and gives that as the fundamental issue. But this is not at all the view held on the subject by the class of freedomists to which it was important he should give attention. They, no less than he, hold that whatever will be was certain from eternity, certain in fact and certain in the divine knowledge, but the ground of the certainty was not the impossibility of the opposite. They hold that in every case in which the action of a free will is concerned the precise opposite might have been, and then the certainty would have been different. That it is as it is is simply because wills are as they are, but not because it was impossible they should be otherwise. The theory is as far from contingency, in the sense of

may not be, as it is from necessity. The fact that an event will certainly occur, or the fact that it is foreknown, neither necessitates its occurrence nor proves that it was so fixed beforehand, nor so inevitable at the time, that it might not have been different. This the freedomist has a right to hold, and in the absence of it there can be no true freedom; but it is what no Augustinian can hold, and it is what Dr. Hodge does not hold, and for the want of which he finds himself inextricably in the coils of necessity. In answer to the question: "Can a man in the exact environments put forth a volition different from the one he does put forth?" he must and does answer, No; and yet he declares the will is free. The ground of the answer is that it is his volition, that it springs from himself alone, that no external causation is involved, that it represents correctly his feeling, reason, and disposition; that therefore he is justly responsible for it; that if it were not precisely what it is it would not represent him, but something else. To this, allowing it to be true, we answer, If the fact remain that he was shut up to the volition, so as not to be able to withhold it or vary it, however it may spring from him alone, and truly represent his innermost nature, and be free from external compulsion, it nevertheless reduces him to a mere machine, and leaves him no more free than a lump of matter. In fact, in the last analysis, his so-called personal act, so far from being free from external compulsory causation, is directly attributable to it. What is external compulsion? If a man were seized by some person and forced to do what he would choose not to do, the case is clear; but is it less clear if the power that creates him so constitutes him that he cannot avoid the choice? Why does he choose as he does? Because he cannot choose otherwise. Why can he not choose otherwise? Because his nature is as it is. Why is his nature as it is? Because his Maker so constituted him.

Then the reason that he does as he does is that his Maker incorporated in the nature he gave him a necessity that he should so act. The compulsion is real, and is external. It invests him with intelligence, and feeling, and spontaneity, but it divests him of freedom, since what he does he cannot avoid doing. The only possible responsibility that can exist in the case must lie back of him, in the creative power which so made him that he is incapable of responsibility; so made him that his volitions must inevitably be precisely as they are. It is nothing that they are his, or represent him, if they represent an automaton. A reasoning, living, feeling automaton, if such a thing were possible, is no more free than a senseless dead thing; and without gross injustice is no more susceptible of blame. Neither reason, nor feeling, nor spontaneity implies freedom—nor all combined. The reason is not free, nor is the feeling, nor is the disposition, nor that state of the mind—the whole complex—which immediately precedes a volition and which Dr. Hodge says determines the volition, so that it must inevitably be as it is. Dr. Hodge admits and teaches this. But if these necessitated states in turn necessitate volition, and the exact volition, and make any other volition impossible, how is it possible to conceive of a closer chain of necessitation? He may dilate as much as he pleases on the peculiarities of an intelligent, sensitive, and volitionating being, but these only diversify the kind of being without breaking the reign of necessity. The theological system defended by this illustrious divine shuts him up to his theory of the will, and is a system which in some of its dogmas expels freedom from the universe. Its theory of foreknowledge, not less than its theory of foreordination, works this result. It makes foreknowledge a result of decree, which not only fixes events in certainty, but in certainty because of necessity. Events are foreknown, not simply as foreseen, but as fixed in causational

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inevitability. The subterfuge of a permissive decree brings no relief to the doctrine. The decree determines what they must be, and an arrangement is made which secures the result. It matters nothing that the result is according to the laws of mind. These laws are instituted to insure the *sole possible* event. Before the scheme is perfected all its inclusions are fixed in inevitability, and it is alleged that for this reason the utmost minutia is foreknown; and it is assumed that in this way alone are foreknowledge and certainty possible. There is, according to this theory, precisely the same possibility, and no more, of alternativity in the realm of spirit as in the realm of matter, and freedom is as predicable of one as of the other. A volition is as much determined by its antecedents as any effect in the physical universe. If it be said the mind is the author of its own volition by its constitution, while the atom is not author of its motion, the answer is, It can no more avoid its volition than an atom can resist gravitation. Herein they are alike; that is, however they may differ in other respects, as to a possible alternativity of action they are precisely alike.

It is vain to say that the decree is not the *efficient* cause, since the theory determines that the so-called efficient cause, the man himself, is bound to the sole act which is decreed, and since, also, the decree so environs the agent that his antecedent state of mind, which the will represents, is one over which he has no control. He is what he is by no act or choice of his, and the necessity which makes him drags the volition. Thus, give the theory the benefit of its last and most cautious utterance, it is still a scheme of necessity. Nothing ever has been which might have been otherwise. Whatever the spontaneity of the human action, and however free from *external* compulsion, he is fettered. His so-called liberty is a mockery. To predicate responsibility of him is an outrage on reason and conscience. When taken in connection with the assumed fact that

his every volition is in accordance with an eternal decree which cannot be resisted, and that he is providentially so environed that his acts are determined to the one possible end of its fulfillment, to pretend that he is responsible, or is held to account for them, and blamed and punished for them, is to do violence to the idea of justice, and to whelm the government of God in unutterable dishonor and disgrace. If it were true it would obliterate the last traces of moral distinctions and convict reason and conscience of fraud. If there were a God who could enact such a scheme, and who could execute it, it would be impossible that men should reverence and worship him until they had first reversed their intuitions of justice and righteousness. But the atrocious supposition is false. It is a misrepresentation of the laws of mind. Its assumption that volition is determined by anything internal or external to the mind is without foundation. The self is a rational being, intelligent, sensitive, moral. It can never divest itself of these characteristics. When it acts it must act with these qualities; but it may and does ignore right reason, right feeling, and conscience. Nor does this divest it of its nature. It is still a reasoning, feeling, and conscience-endowed being, whether it act in accordance with its best promptings or against them. Dr. Hodge seems to imagine that he makes a point when he says: "All the desires, affections, or feelings which determine the will to act must have an object, and that object by which the feeling is excited and toward which it tends must be discerned by the understanding. It is this that gives them their rational character, and renders the determination of the will rational. Any volition which does not follow the best dictates of the understanding in this sense of the word is the act of an idiot. It may be spontaneous, just as the acts of brutes are, but it cannot be free in the sense of being the act of an accountable person." *

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 287.

What a strange mixture of truth and error! Certainly a rational being must apprehend the object toward which he acts; there is no dispute about that; but is that the same as to say that his act must be the last dictate of his reason? May he not be a reasoning being and yet act as a fool? Is not that the exact fact in all cases of wrongdoing? When a man acts against his reason it does not prove that he is an idiot or that he acts upon mere spontaneity as a brute does. If it were so it would free him from responsibility. But it proves this, rather, that, being a reasonable being, he acts like an idiot. He acts against what from his nature he knows to be right. That is his sin. For that reason he becomes subject of blame. The last state of his understanding, before his act, was to see the right, and know it, and feel its obligation; his act was to reject it, and debase himself by playing the part of a fool. We repeat, therefore, that freedom is the absolute mastery the mind has over its own acts, be they right or wrong. It can do as it ought or as it ought not. Which it will do it determines. It is not shut up to do, as the greatest good or as what seems to it the greatest good, as the strongest motive or as any particular motive, but determines for itself what it will do. It is sovereign of its own acts. It says, It is unreasonable, it is abhorrent, it is essentially wrong, but I will do it and take the consequences; or, It is right, it is what ought to be, it is good—I know all this—but I will not do it. If you ask why, it answers, Because I choose to. If you ask why it chooses to, it might assign many reasons, as, I feel like it; I am disposed to; I take the risk. But, whatever the reason of the action, it cannot be assigned as the efficient cause, or as the determining cause. It is one among many of the possible incitants to act, and the one which is selected. Any other might have been, this one is that in view of which the actor determines himself. To say that he could not therefore have determined differently

is what he consciously knows is not true. One need only test by the little, common events of each passing moment to assure him of the truth in every case. Alternatives are always present with him. He is exercising the power of selection every instant, choosing this instead of that; and to pretend that he is shut up to the *de facto* accepted form of action is to say that he cannot but close his eye, move his head, shift his position, or pronounce the word, if he intentionally perform any one of these acts. Its absurdity and utter falsity are so plain that we cannot suppose that those who propound it are grave and sincere.

Dr. Hodge is persistently shy of the point which has so confused his compeers, the influence of motives, but he does not escape. He says: "Most of the arguments against the statement that motives are the cause of volition are founded on the assumption that they are affirmed to be producing causes, and that it is intended to deny that the agent is the efficient cause of his own acts; whereas the meaning simply is that motives are the reasons that determine the agent to assert his efficiency in one way rather than another. *They are, however, truly causes, in so far as they determine the effect to be thus, and not otherwise.*"* Now, nobody ever taught that the motives did the deed of the agent; that they were in that sense efficient cause. The man does the act; he is efficient cause. But how does this relieve Dr. Hodge? He says the motives cause him to do it; determine it to be as it is. The man puts forth the power, but the motive makes him do it; it determines him. If the motive determines him he is as unfree to the opposite as if a muscular force compelled him. The act is his, in the same sense in which the river current is the act of the river, so far as ability not to act, or to act differently, is concerned. If you could make the river understand that it flows, and impart to it a desire to flow, and leave it under the same necessity

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 290.

that now makes it flow, you would have an exact analogy to the case of the man impelled by motive. He perceives an object toward which to act; it excites him in a certain manner; he is moved thereby to act, and has no power to resist it. Is it not a misnomer to call this freedom? Is it not impossible to make it the ground of responsibility?

When he comes to speak of *liberty* and *ability* he evinces the same confusion and embarrassment. It is obvious in every line that he is forced to put evasive meaning on the words with which the problem requires him to deal.

We set over against these definitions this one: "Freedom of will consists in the absence of all insuperable impediments, internal or external, to the *use* of the power of choice and executive volitions, whenever an occasion for its exercise exists." This definition recognizes the fact that the power is a power which belongs to a person; that the power and use of it are discrete; that the freedom is predicable, not of the power, but of him who uses it; that the freedom consists in the absence of insuperable impediments in the way of its use; that in order to be used there must be an occasion or end.

We have seen that the power he has is two-faceted—power to choose an end, and power to effectuate the end chosen. But this makes it necessary that in order to the use of the power there should be an object, and that to be an object it must be known, and must awaken sensibility, and must be possible. For the power to choose is not power to choose when there is nothing to be chosen. There is nothing to be chosen when there is nothing known or felt; and nothing can be chosen if the objects known and felt are known to be impossible. A person must possess the power of will that he may be a person, but there are indispensable external conditions of its exercise without which it would lie fallow forever; in the absence of which the nonuse and nonpossibility of use are no limitation

of personal freedom; for how can there be freedom to choose when there is nothing to be chosen? and what limitation of freedom is it to make it impossible to choose an object which it is known cannot be possessed, or not to be able to put forth power to accomplish what it is known cannot be accomplished?

In order that choice may be exercised there must be plurality of objects. The term itself means selection, or determination to one rather than another, and all equivalent terms imply this. If the object be single it always presents the alternative of choice or rejection, to do or not do. This is the most restricted alternativity possible. From this it may widen into any number of alternatives, out of which one only may be chosen. In most cases there are reasons for and against, with a like division of feeling; the reasons and feelings take opposite sides, and the conflict is sharp and earnest. In a few cases the intelligence and sensibilities agree. In the former case choice is difficult, in the latter it is frictionless and easy, but in all cases the person is master of the power and determines what the choice shall be. It is never made without the consciousness that it might be other than it is—unless it may be in some gust of passion, when the deed is rather an impulse than a rational act, or when by long course of habit the person is reduced to mere automatism and freedom is substantially destroyed, and the power runs away with the master. That there are cases of this kind there can be no doubt. Freedom may be obscured, weakened, overslaughed, possibly destroyed, but during probationary existence it remains intact, and manifestation of it is constant and the consciousness of it complete. When destroyed the subject ceases to be a proper object of command, and probation ends; but he may continue to be a proper object of punishment forever for bringing himself by a criminal abuse of freedom into this abject and guilty condition. When we heed reason against desire or yield to desire against

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reason, when we curb passion or indulge it, it is with the perfect knowledge that we had, at the moment, power to the opposite, and that there was no impediment to its exercise which necessitated us to the sole and single act. And it is on this ground alone that we predicate of our act desert of praise or blame. If we could once persuade ourselves that the deed was unavoidable—that in the exact circumstances in which the choice was made and act performed we had no power to the contrary, or could not use it—it would forever be impossible to create in us any feeling of responsibility, and we should be as incapable of remorse as a piston or a water-wheel driven by absolute forces. It serves nothing toward restoring the idea of responsibility to say that the act was chosen, that it was spontaneous, that it was our act, that there was no external force, that we did as we pleased, or that we were free, if it be once established that we could not avoid it—that it was not in our power to refrain from it or do something else. This is so manifestly true, so accordant with the common everyday experience, with the universal consciousness; so absolutely essential to all ideas of morality; so ineradicable as long as any sense of responsibility remains on earth; so the basis of all law, human and divine; so corporate in the structure of language and institutions—so a law of thought itself—that it never could have been called in question but by a system which abolishes God from the universe, or one which traduces his character and throne. Either, the one no more than the other, reduces man to a mere piece of mechanism, and all his acts—great and small, whether of intellect, or affection, or will, or external deed—to the same category as secretions, differing only in kind; both, the one no more than the other, make conscience a brazen fraud, a false accuser, a usurper; and either converts its reproofs into abuses and its warnings into a mere *brutum fulmen*, or convicts the

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Author of the universe of a character more frightful than human imagination has as yet been able to portray.

The proofs of freedom, as here defined, are, first, *consciousness*. If there be any deliverance in consciousness on the subject of our powers it is this. We are no more conscious of a power to know or feel than we are of the power to choose and put forth executive acts. We are no more conscious of the power to choose than we are of the power to choose the opposite of any choice we make. It never occurs to us, when the power is exerted, that it is a power to that sole act. When we make it a subject of thought we intuitively know that it is not. From the conviction of the intuitive reason, posited in consciousness, however we may be confused by sophistry, we never escape. The conviction is not simply that we have power to choose, and do spontaneously choose as we do, but that we could choose otherwise. The structure of every language on earth demonstrates that this accords with the universal thought—that it is a spontaneous utterance of mind as mind. Such agreement can only arise from an inevitable deliverance of consciousness, or absolute intuition. It makes nothing against this that theories repudiate it.

It is objected that consciousness does not reach a latent, unused power, but only the power which is actually exerted; that we are conscious, not of what we could do, but of what we do. This is not true. Before we act we are conscious of the power to act, and if we were not we could not act at all. An object is placed before the mind, an object of perception. It awakes consciousness by exciting perception. We come to know self and what the self does. The object awakens desire or some state of feeling. We become immediately conscious, not only of desire, but of a power to act toward it, to choose it or refuse it. This consciousness of power to choose or refuse is not subsequent to the act, but antecedent and requisite con-

dition of it. Thus consciousness of power precedes the use of power, and it is consciousness of power to or from—to choose or reject.

The second proof is *that we are responsible for our acts*. This, like the one just named, is an intuitive and uneradicable conviction of mind as mind. All institutions of government and discipline repose on it; all languages express it; all personal remorse and self-approval imply it; all condemnation or commendation of others for their acts or nonacts proclaim it. There is no escape from it, except by a process of self-abuse which obliterates all traces of mind. But we likewise intuitively know that, if responsible, we must have powers over our acts: to will or not to will; power to the opposite, power to and from. We know that, in every case where we discover necessity, immediately we become unable to predicate responsibility absolutely. Freedom, as power to the opposite, and responsibility stand or fall together. The one can no more stand without the other than consciousness can without a living, intelligent subject. The idea of responsibility is not empirical, not something that comes after experience. Experience does, indeed, establish it; we see by it that we are responsible; but, before the act and the resulting effects, we feel the responsibility; we anticipate the effect; we discern what it will and must be. Consciousness of responsibility is the precursor of every moral act; and this consciousness is that the proposed act is right or wrong, and that if done we shall be required to answer; and that we can only be required to answer as it is our free and unnecessitated act; that when we perform it we possess the power to the opposite. On these grounds alone are we able to think responsibility.

Third: the Scriptures affirm freedom as *power to the opposite*; its accusations and persuasions are meaningless without it. To this view of freedom several objections are made; not on

the ground that it is irrational, nor yet that it is unscriptural, but that it is irreconcilable with other doctrines which are held to be true. It is safe to say that if it were considered apart, by itself, it would never be challenged. The exigencies of systems create the debate; the proof of which is that those who reject it nevertheless in all practical matters accept it, and in their theorizings avoid and confuse the real issue in every way possible. Materialists reject it because it presupposes a moral realm, which they deny. They do not deny the phenomena of consciousness and conscience, on which it rests, but they set them down as a delusion and a snare, and therefore as proving nothing, and as deserving only such consideration as hallucinations are entitled to. Their one answer is, Freedom implies a class of powers which do not exist; therefore it is false: there is no effect without a cause, and every cause is potent to the effect. If materialism were true the argument would be unanswerable and the moral universe would be abolished. Augustinians—Calvinists—reject it, for the reasons following:

1. It is inconsistent with the sovereignty of God. See answer in the discussion of Sovereignty.
2. It is inconsistent with the divine plans and decrees.
3. It is irreconcilable with the foreknowledge of God.
4. It is a kind of freedom not necessary to meet the demands of the moral problem.

The freedom necessary to constitute us moral beings, it is alleged, is simply the freedom to do as we choose, or to act out what is in us. If by this is meant freedom to do external acts it is not freedom of will at all, since the will-act must precede the external act. If acting out what is in us means acting according to nature, this is the freedom of natural forces to produce their effects. In either case it leaves us wholly powerless as to effects by leaving us wholly necessitated as to our

causality. The will is the fountain of all efficiency; if we do not have power over its decisions or activity we have no power. That which the moral problem demands is that we should have freedom as to our own causality; that we should be causes in the true and proper sense; that is, that we should originate the beginning of our responsible activity. If the choices are caused in us, and not by us, and the acts flow from the necessitated choices, the acts are not ours, but must be ascribed to the necessitating agent which puts our power of choice in action.

5. It is alleged that we are conscious of being influenced by motives, and if influenced in some measure there can be no adequate ground for assuming that the influence may not be irresistible.

Influence of motives prepares us for action by furnishing an end attractive to the reason and feeling, or otherwise; but here its function ceases. If it also determined our act, in what respect would we differ from the needle when it is drawn to the magnet, and how could responsibility be any more predicated of the one than the other? It matters nothing that it is our character which gives power to the motive, since our character is simply a product of causes outside our freedom. The theory takes freedom from us as really as if the resulting act were forced directly. Allow that by a course of free acts we make ourselves what we are, and so give power to internal and external motives, and the case is clear. We may by a process of freedom make ourselves impure; may bind chains about us that we cannot break; but then it is we that do it—and we are responsible for the enslavement and whatever evil ensues. In such a case we are not responsible for that to which we had no power, but for the destruction of a power which we did possess.

6. It is alleged that our depravity is such that, without grace, we are disabled to good.

This is admitted; but we are not without grace, and not responsible for the depravity except as, by the refusal of grace, we permit it to dominate us.

7. It is said that after probation—by the admission of all parties—the good are unchangeably fixed in good and the evil in evil, and this without affecting their merit or demerit.

The confirmation of saints in a state of unchanging holiness does not destroy their freedom to the opposite, but simply denotes that they have entered a condition in which they *will* resist evil and choose good forever. It is not a growth out of freedom into necessity, or a change from responsible to non-responsible existence, but it is advancement to a state where temptation will practically cease, and the spontaneity will be frictionless toward the good, but not under the laws of necessity. The reverse is true of the evil. The holiness of the one and the evil of the other will have arisen from freedom, and will continue to be the expression of freedom. But it is said they *will* never change. Admitted. This does not prove that they are not free. There may be a sufficient reason for their remaining as they become without binding them in the chains of necessity—without reducing them to mere automata.

The Scriptures do, indeed, teach the permanence of the good in goodness and of the evil in evil—the certainty that they will never change—but this is not the affirmation that they are not free; to assume it is to be wise above what is written; but even if this were affirmed it would not imply that their being in this fixed condition is not because of acts which were performed in freedom. If it should appear that a human spirit may come to fixedness in evil by a long course of evil habit, or by separation from gracious influences as a just punishment for sin, it would not change the fact of its responsibility for its condition, since it is the result of abuse of free will. The ground of blame for present acts would be that the authors of

them brought themselves into the condition of fixedness by former free courses of self-abuse. They might not, indeed, be responsible for what they now do, or fail to do, if it be impossible to do otherwise, but they would be answerable for making it impossible. The good, on the other hand, are but reaping the just reward of a holy life, which has developed in them, not a necessary continuance in holiness, but a free and changeless volition to it. But it is said that even now the wicked cannot turn themselves to God, and especially that they cannot make themselves good. They must be able to do both of these if they are required. No being can be commanded to do what is impossible and the command be just. If of mere nature the thing is impossible it will be found the requirement does not rest on mere nature. If grace be needed to supplement weakness it will be found the grace is always given. Freedom does not apply to all things. A man is not free to fly, or subsist without food, or to do anything for which he has no faculty; but this does not imply that he is not free in his proper sphere. A man cannot annihilate the fact that he has sinned, cannot purge his depravity, cannot by a volition make himself holy; but this does not imply that he cannot do anything he is required to do, and for the not doing of which he is blameworthy. The fact is admonitory that the growing influence of habit may make it irresistible, but it does not prove nonfreedom, but rather the opposite, during a period of probation. It makes the possible loss of freedom a possible element of punishment. A soul reaching this state cannot be said, henceforth, to be so much blamable for its habitual sinfulness and helplessness as for those free acts which brought it into such a forlorn state. It rests under eternal blame for being as it is and doing as it does, since it was the free cause of its own evil state. It once might have been avoided, and it is now a just recompense. The truth remains that there must be ability

where there is responsibility, and a condition of blamableness and punishment must be the outcome of acts which were free, and so which might have been avoided. No being can ever be blamed that could not have done other than that for which he is blamed, and no being can be entitled to praise for doing or being anything which is the result of necessity, be it internal or external. These axioms are, like all other axioms, eternal and necessary truths.

It may indeed be a question whether a soul once enthralled by sin can ever work out its own deliverance or have power of self-restoration to holiness. It may even be certain that it cannot; but it must be certain that it cannot be placed in this condition by actions necessitated in it, and that it cannot be blamed for not doing what is impossible. All ground of condemnation must rest on the freedom it once possessed, and by the abuse of which it is reduced to its hopeless state of helplessness and ruin.

There may, indeed, come a time when efforts at reclamation may cease; but so long as invitation is extended, and the duty of reformation is urged upon or by the conscience, there must be either personal power to comply or some external help available. The offers of salvation and the demands made for obedience in the Gospel are a mockery if the sinner has no power of his own, and none in his reach, by which he may comply with the one and obey the other. When possible action to the right ceases the exhortation and command must cease. If it is said, If this be so, then, when a sinner, by reason of his sin, incurs disability to be holy, which was his duty, holiness ceases to be a duty, and his continued unholiness is no violation of his obligation, and it can no more be said of him that he ought to be holy—we answer, This certainly does not follow. He ought to be holy; he has made himself unable to be so; the obligation is not abolished, and

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for the disability, self-superinduced, he may be justly punished. The measure of his guilt is precisely the measure of the ought which was possible to him, and for which he was responsible. That he cannot now render it is his own fault, and while he cannot be required to do the impossible thing he may be justly punishable for the not doing of it, or to the full extent of the measure of guilt for not doing it, since by disabling himself he failed in the service justly required of him. Nor would this be punishing for acts to which the guilty party was not able. He was able. He made himself unable. His guilt was incurred under the conditions which make guilt possible; it remains now under conditions in which it would be impossible if the present state were not self-superinduced. But, it is said, still the blame is imputed for a state or acts which are now inevitable, and this breaks down the rule that no blame can be imputed when acts are inevitable. We answer, This is not true. All the life of sin was evitable once, and we blame the culprit because he has lived it, and continues to live it, when he might have avoided it.

To the doctrine of freedom it is further objected that it is in contradiction of the established doctrine of a sufficient cause; that it releases the will from the operation of the universal law. The law is, "For each effect there must be a cause, and the cause produces the effect." Volitions are effects; a sufficient cause must be assignable; but these volitions come under the general law of causation, and freedom can no more be predicable of them than of other effects. Each volition must have a sufficient cause, and the sufficient cause must produce the exact and only effect of which it is the sufficient cause; it cannot be a cause and not a cause at the same time, and it may not be a cause of nothing in particular; since, then, the existence of the cause necessitates the existence of the effect, volitional effects cannot be free. Let us do justice to this objec-

tion. What do we mean by cause? "The word cause," Dr. Hodge says, "is ambiguous. Sometimes it means the mere occasion; sometimes the instrument by which something is accomplished; sometimes the efficiency to which the effect is due; sometimes the end for which a thing is done, as when we speak of final causes; sometimes the ground or reason why the effect or action of the efficient cause is so rather than otherwise. To say that motives are the occasional causes of volitions is consistent with any theory of agency, whether of necessity or indifference. To say that they are efficient causes is to transfer the efficiency of the agent to the motives; but to say that they are the ground or reason why the volitions are what they are is to say that every rational being, in every rational act, must have a reason, good or bad, for acting as he does."*

When, then, it is said that an event must have an adequate cause, we mean one of these several things: a person which produces it, or the reason why the person acts, or an end to which it is exerted. Ultimate cause must be spontaneous; that is, must be uncaused, must have the grounds of action in itself. This, in the last analysis, is the only proper idea of cause; and the action of such a cause must be free.

In what way is freedom inconsistent with the doctrine that every effect must have a sufficient cause? Suppose a being exist such as man is, an effect-producing being, is there any impropriety in calling him a cause? If not, what would we mean by ascribing to him that character? He walks or rides. If we inquire for the cause of the walking or riding are we not satisfied with the answer that the man is the cause? Do we ever think it necessary to look further to find the cause—some other cause that sets the cause agoing? We do not doubt there is an end or reason for the action which he perceives or feels; and we often say he does the act, whatever it may be, because

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 289, 290.

of the reason ; but we do not mean that the reason is the force expressed in the act, but only the end for which he employs a self-contained power. He exerts the power, and so is the cause. For a free volition, then, there is a cause, and the cause is the person who exerts it. He is adequate to it. Prior to the volition he exists, and has latent power which, under suitable conditions, he can spontaneously convert into active power, of which volition will be the expression. The suitable condition is the perception of an end which seems reasonable, or desirable and possible, to him. This perception puts him into the condition for action, or for becoming a *de facto* cause. The requisite power is in him to make him cause. He needs but use it. When he does use it for the end which he perceives to be reasonable or desirable we say he does it, and do not think it necessary to seek something else to explain it. The effect is a choice ; the power he is is the cause of the choice. There were several alternatives before him, or reasons for this or that or the other ; the power was that of choice between them. When he chooses one we say he had the power to choose, and that explains the choice ; but then the power to choose was power to choose the others as well as the one chosen. He is sufficient cause for any of the alternatives—he is equal to any of them—but he becomes real cause to the end which is actually effected by his use of power. What the use is he determines.

Thus we see that there are no valid objections against the doctrine of freedom as alternativity, or power of self-determination to either of alternative ends ; and also we see that the sophistical objections urged against it are inventions in the interests of other false doctrines of a false theory but for the necessities of which they would never have been invented ; that they do violence to intuitive convictions and consciousness itself ; that they spring either from atheism, pantheism,

fatalism, or a form of natural theism, or perverted scriptural theism, all of which are schemes of necessity, and which do away with the existence and possibility of a moral universe, and ideas of right and wrong, ought and ought not, rewards and punishments, fundamental thereto. The exclusion of freedom excludes the possibility of anything different from what has been, is, or will be, and renders absurd and meaningless all idea of attempt at bringing about improvement of any kind, or of concern or regret for anything that may be; and all that can be said in explanation of such feelings as ought and ought not, remorse, shame, regret, and desire for the better, is that they are meaningless products of necessity, doing no good and serving no purpose, or at best that they are an artifice by which to deceive men with false imaginations of a part which they suppose themselves to act. Since the facts are as they are, and never could have been otherwise, it is an entirely indifferent question what the fountain head of the necessity is. A universe constructed on this theory can only be as it is, and if it could be different—but it cannot—might swing through its meaningless round of changes with utter indifference, and, having detected the fraud of all ideas of responsibility, ought to exterminate all remorse, all sense of obligation—all ethical lumber—and submit to fate cheerfully and extort from it whatever it can of gratification. But why do we say ought? There is no ought. It must and will be just as it turns out to be.

The idea is so repugnant to laws of thought that language and thought itself would have to be revolutionized before it can be conceived or expressed. The necessity that presses us renders all our established modes of thinking false, and cumbers our language with words which represent only lies.

The theory of freedom, on the other hand, fits to all the facts of existence, furnishes the indispensable conditions to responsibility, lays the foundations of moral government, accords with

intuitive convictions, is in harmony with consciousness, gives function and authority to conscience, makes the restraints and demands of law just, satisfies the dictates of reason, agrees with experience, harmonizes with revelation—its promises, invitations, commands, reproofs, and warnings—gives dignity to virtue and heinousness to vice; in a word, ennobles man as a free and responsible agent and enthrones God as a just and honorable sovereign of the universe. It makes sin sin, and holiness holiness. It lifts being from the dead sea of necessity, and glorifies it with the powers and possibilities of freedom. It creates a heaven for goodness and justifies a hell for evil. It makes the difference between matter and spirit, angels and devils. Take it away, and nothing remains but brute necessity and a dark and dismal outlook of dread and despair full of possible inevitable evil. Against it no fact of experience, no suggestion of reason, no teaching of revelation properly interpreted, no utterance of conscience, no deliverance of consciousness, can be alleged. For these reasons we accept it, and find it the key to the problem of being and to the justification of the ways of God with man. It is not simply a truth, but it is a master truth; not a factor simply, but a prime factor in the structure of moral being; a determiner of all right thought; there is no moral universe without it; it is the foundation of ethics. As well surrender God as give it up; nay, give it up, and any concept of God that may remain is one which is so discreditable that it is no longer God but fate, or worse, that is left.

We conclude that man is a responsible being, made so by being endowed with power to originate his own intentional acts, determine his own volitions, choose his own destiny; so that, whatever the result, he is the author of it; and so that, whatever it is, he might have made it otherwise. God is just and good in so making and endowing him, and in rendering to him according to his deserts.

GUILT.

THE significance of this word becomes of great importance. Some define it "liability to punishment." Prefix the words "that which constitutes," and we accept the definition. It imports a quality of a person, arising from his relations to moral law, which renders him deserving of its condemnation, and of a punishment inflicted by its author. It is a state or quality of ill desert which arises from an act of the will, or the non-act of the will, in conscious violation of law, which act is sin. The guilt is not the same thing as the sin, but it cannot exist without sin, and no sin can be without it. It goes with sin as form with substance; and is that of sin which denotes its evil and is the measure of it—or rather denotes the demerit of the sinner himself and is the measure of his personal ill desert. It always attaches *to a person*, but only *for an act* or a state which results from an act. It is not the act alone that is displeasing to law, but the person who commits it—on account of it. The act is harmful, and bad, but the actor is guilty. The law prohibits the act, condemns the actor. There are two closely related ideas in an inseparable unity; wrong describes the one, guilt describes the other. If we are right in this definition of guilt, then whatever of evils may exist in a nature, however the nature may be disconformed to its law, guilt may not be predicated of it unless the disconformity be the result of a free act; and as sin always implies guilt, so sin may not be predicated of it. In order to the existence of sin and guilt, two factors which cannot exist apart, as there can never be sinless guilt or guiltless sin, there must be a person, a law, and an act: a person that is free; a law that commands; and voluntary disobedience of the command. Since the law only commands

what is good the act which caused its breach must necessarily be evil, or bad ; since the person had power to obey, and was obliged by the command, the person for his evil act is guilty. Guilt to him is inherent in the act. One contains the other. Whatever else may be predicated of a free being, as to his nature, or the relations of his powers, or his activities—whatever of disorder, or disharmony, or unloveliness, or folly, or harmfulness, or degradation, or absolute ruin and overthrow—sin and guilt are facts which can only be predicated of him when he originated as a will a transgression of a law whose requirements he knew, and whose obligation he voluntarily disregarded. Other breaches of law by him—of law unknown, or law to the obedience of which he had no power—were not breaches of his law, for under such conditions law there could not be ; and of such breaches, whatever calamity may result to himself or the universe, neither sin nor guilt can be predicated without a misuse of language and gross perversion of thought. Laws broken by unmoral beings, or by moral beings without knowledge, or under necessity, are not moral breaches, or breaches of moral law, for in such cases there is no subject of moral law ; and there can be no law binding where there is not a subject, or in a matter in relation to which a person is not a subject.

PUNISHMENT.

WE have now seen that sin is the moral act of a moral being in violation of moral law; that guilt is the *desert* of punishment which accrues to him consequent thereupon. It remains that we consider the import of the word punishment. It is considered by some to be any kind of suffering endured by a moral being; so that all sufferings are pronounced punishments. This is by no means clear. *Punishment is that suffering which is inflicted upon a person because of some ill desert which is supposed to attach to him in view of a transgression of moral law perpetrated by him, and expresses the displeasure of the lawgiver against him on account of his act.* Thus it is plain that by punishment we do not mean pain, misery, suffering, or distress indifferently, and without respect to their causes; but we do mean sufferings inflicted on a person for the purpose of expressing displeasure against him on account of some personal act in relation to law. When the party inflicting the punishment is God it expresses the displeasure of God against him for some breach of law which God commanded him to obey.

Here are two distinct concepts: one that of a person suffering; the other that of a person inflicting suffering for a definite purpose. The question is, Does the first concept always include the second? This is often assumed. We deny. It is an important question. If those are right whose position we antagonize, then suffering, in all cases, shows sin in the sufferer. If, on the other hand, we are right, then there may be suffering where there is no sin. The position we assume is so important, and yet has been so overlooked, or, what is worse, denied, that we will illustrate it at a greater length.

There are clearly discernible three classes or kinds of suffering, having distinct sources, and expressive of different purposes:

1. Sufferings that are penal: punishments, in which the sufferer suffers because of guilt; that is, because of some breach of law which he ought not to have committed but which he did freely commit; in view of which act the displeasure of the law-maker is excited against him and his power exerted upon him. Such a case is that in human law in which a person is executed for murder, or imprisoned for crime; or, under divine law, that in which God exerts the penalty of his law—which is exclusion from his favor, and consequent remorse—against the transgressor.

2. The case of suffering in consequence of another's sin or directly by means of it—by means of some natural or social relation to the guilty party, or some wrong done to the sufferer. Such a case is that where a child suffers by inheriting the consequences of his father's crime; or when he inherits disease; or where innocence is destroyed by violence. The suffering does, indeed, in such cases, result from crime, but it were a great abuse of language, and a much greater abuse of justice, to call it punishment. If punishment, by what law, and for what offense? Then there is a suffering that is not punishment; that, indeed, so far from implying guilt in the sufferer, shows him to be the victim, in the matter of his suffering, of an atrocious wrong.

3. Suffering which exists wholly irrespective of guilt or punishment either in the subject of it or anywhere else; which is neither punishment of a guilty person, nor is superinduced by natural or social relations to a guilty person, nor yet is caused directly by a guilty person. This class of cases, if they exist, proves that there is no necessary connection whatever between suffering and the idea, or rather fact, of guilt; so that a uni-

verse in which no guilt is, and consequently no punishment, might nevertheless be a suffering universe. Such we conceive not only might be the case, but certainly has been and is the case. On no other principle can we explain the suffering of pre-Adamite races; the suffering now, and all along the ages, of unmoral races. The former suffered when as yet there was no sin. The latter do yet suffer when it is impossible there should be sin. It has never yet been shown, and we venture to assert that it cannot be shown, that sufferings, and even great sufferings, might not be beneficially and beneficently included in a universe in which sin did not exist at all: sufferings conditional to and compensated by a higher good not otherwise attainable; sufferings expressive of no displeasure at violated law, but born of love, the offspring of benignity—working to the greatest good of the sufferer—or sufferings incident to a nature capable of enjoyments of some kind.

Here, then, is the generic difference between mere suffering and punishment; a distinction so broad as to be universally recognized except by a class of theologians, and by them in all cases except when the necessities of a theory confuse their perceptions.

The value of this discussion consists in this, that it rules out suffering as a proof of sin, and so destroys an argument which has often been employed to establish the sin of infants and, what is still more wonderful, the sin of our Saviour himself!

Having found the origin of sin, and wherein it consists, we are now prepared to examine the questions, How did the primal sin affect the Adam himself; and how did, and how does, it affect his posterity?

These have long been most important questions in theology—not more important than difficult. They have given rise to protracted and earnest and, it is sad to add, many times most exasperated discussions. The most candid and able men have

occupied extremely oppugnant positions. But the questions are so intrinsically important that it is impossible they should rest until a nearer approach to harmony is reached. The discussion must progress. It ought to be conducted with patience and candor.

We take the questions up in their order: What was the effect of the Adam sin upon himself? To this question divers answers have been returned, but in the main there has been substantial agreement. On the following points there is absolute harmony: (*a*) His *act* of disobedience began, not with the temptation or solicitation, whether internal or external, but with the free consent of his will to the act; it was completed by the overt act of disobedience; and the completed act rendered him guilty in the sight of God. (*b*) The immediate result of the act was that from the enjoyment of the divine favor and fellowship he became an object of displacence, and became at once subject to the death threatened. There is not perfect agreement as to the import of the term death in the threatened punishment. There can be no doubt that it was utter death—immediate and perpetual severance from his true end; the overthrow of the good of his being; death temporal, or the cessation of his natural life; death spiritual, or the destruction of his spiritual life of communion with God. In both forms the effect was necessarily perpetual under course of mere law. Some have imagined that death, the threatened penalty, included—had, indeed, for its very substance—extinction, or utter annihilation. For this idea we think there is no scriptural warrant; but the revelation on the subject is exceedingly brief, and it is perhaps quite impossible to know what, under course of law, would have happened to the Adam. It is not agreed that, on the supposition that immediate physical death was included in the sentence threatened, it must necessarily be inferred that temporal death would not have taken place had he not sinned. For its imme-

mediate infliction there might be in his act of disobedience a legal reason, as we shall find there was. But this is not conclusive of the point that, had he not sinned, he would not ultimately have died in course of nature. This assumption is often made, but it is without warrant, either of reason or revelation. (c) An immediate effect of his sin was the introduction into his nature of abnormalcy; a depraved condition and tendency such that, in himself, there was no power to restore himself to righteousness and the forfeited favor of God. Sin, working moral severance from God, became enthroned and dominant over him. Guilt, and consequent liability to the threatened punishment, left him helpless under the law, utterly without means or power of purging himself. Had the case been closed with his act of disobedience the penalty must immediately have supervened, for reasons which will appear, and as a consequence the race would have perished in its root. Under law the race did so perish.

Such was the effect of the Adam sin upon himself under law. It made him guilty, left him abnormal, and slew him. The law result was death, utter and perpetual.

But the race did not perish; the sentence was not executed, if so be this result was included in it. What is the explanation? Why did not the law take its course?

What did happen was an interposed redemption; the law course was estopped. The veil of oblivion is forever thrown over what would have been, and we see only the course of events under redemption.

The Adam did not immediately die a physical death for his sin, but lived; but he was not the same Adam he was at first. He was Adam the fallen: a sinner—out of favor—under sentence—bowed with the consciousness of guilt—driven from Eden—his heritage and his heart clouded with sin and curse—the moral glory and strength of his life departed—self-centered

and, under the frown of his Maker, exposed to endless wrath; yet he was Adam reprieved: provisionally redeemed; offered pardon; placed under circumstances of mercy; encouraged and helped to regain his lost position of favor; the sentence still over him, but possible to be lifted; restoration, not to his old position, but to a better, offered on practicable conditions. The law left to its own course would have cut the tree of humanity down before it branched; blasted the potentialities in the uprooted stock. This point will be further discussed after we shall have presented another and extremely different theory—the theory of original sin, as popularly held.

There are three theories of the effect of Adam's sin upon his posterity, or, more properly, upon his nature and that of his descendants.

The first, in the order in which we shall notice them, is commonly called the Pelagian view, from the name of its most illustrious expounder.

The effects that have resulted from Adam's sin are effects confessed by all; effects modified and limited by supervening redemption, and which as to his posterity could not have been possible without redemption. We have already said that precisely what might have been the course of events under law, as to Adam, we do not know, but can only imperfectly conjecture.

But, whilst we do not know precisely what might in fact have occurred, we do know intuitively and absolutely some things that could not have occurred under the government of an infinitely wise and just, much more under the government of an infinitely good and loving, God. And among the things thus known this is most conspicuous: he could not have been permitted to live and propagate a race the individuals of which race should, because of any actual or hypothetical relation they sustained to him—any imputation of his act, or

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derivation of his nature—be accounted guilty and come under sentence of curse; *which is only saying that he could not have become father to a race already damned.*

The corollary of this postulate is, either under course of law he would have had no posterity, or children born to him would not have inherited his curse but would have had a fair individual trial. Since the latter could scarcely be, with the effects of his sin upon his nature and theirs, and his sinful example and unholy influence upon them during infancy and youth, the periods of inexperience, the former would have been the alternative; he would have had no posterity.

The law cut Adam down; *he was legally dead*, but redemption interposed and restored him.

The question now before us is, What was the status of the redeemed Adam and of his posterity? To this we answer:

1. He was permitted, under the redemption, to live for a time on the earth instead of being precipitated at once into utter death.

2. He was granted a new probation, with such gracious helps as placed pardon for his sin and restoration to the divine favor in his reach.

3. His nature was corrupted by his sin, and so remains until it is regenerated by the divine Spirit.

4. Under the redemption he was restored to the forfeited privilege of the headship of a race, but with the consequence to the race—and to himself—that it should inherit the evils of his depravity and the conditions of the new probation under redemption. His life upon earth should be one of manifold sorrows and struggles, and should inevitably end in physical death.

5. If he should repent, and avail himself of the proffered pardon and regeneration procured by and offered in redemp-

tion, which though powerless in himself he should be enabled to do by a divine empowering that would come to him, he should, after a life of trial, warfare, and suffering on the earth, finally attain to the everlasting life of bliss and holiness which he would have attained by obedience had he never sinned.

6. He was permitted to beget children in the likeness of his fallen nature, but under provisions of redemption.

This we conceive is a fair and sufficiently full statement in this connection of the condition into which the redemption brought the Adam and his posterity. It placed him on a new platform of probation, but he commenced his new probation not as he commenced the old. Then he was pure and innocent, and his probation was to test whether he would remain so and by obedience attain to a holy character. Now he was fallen, and his probation was to test whether he would penitently accept help. His guilt then was to arise from disobedience. His guilt now was a fact to arise from his rejection of proffered mercy. Eden closed against him, under the law, because he had sinned. Heaven closes against him, under redemption, because he will not repent.

To this answer I know of no objection except upon the single point of the effect of the Adam sin upon his nature, and by consequence upon his posterity.

From this the Pelagian view dissents. As we understand them they hold, from Pelagius to Bellows, the so-called liberal Christians of to-day, that the sin of Adam, which consisted in an act, did not at all affect his nature, but only his personal relations to law; his nature remained the same after as before the act. There was no subjective change wrought, but only a new relation of the subject to violated law. If any change in the subject, it was only the presence of the power of habit—a tendency to repeat a once-performed act. James Freeman Clarke,

a candid critic generally, and certainly fair when he represents *liberal Christianity*, so called, thus states the view as now held :

“Liberal Christianity regards man, not as in a state of disease and needing medicine, but as in a state of health, needing diet, exercise, and favorable circumstances, in order that he may grow up a well-developed individual. It regards sin, not as a radical disease with which all men are born, but as a temporary malady to which all are liable. It does not, therefore, necessarily dwell on sin and salvation, but on duty and improvement. Man’s nature it regards as radically good, and even divine, because made by God.” *

Dr. Bellows † holds this language: “Who, for instance, will wish to conceal or deny the hereditary descent of dangerous propensities any more than of good and beautiful dispositions? We do not deny that goiter, consumption, gout, are hereditary, but we do not allow that this shows the human body to be depraved in its origin or constitution. When we take away the subjects of these diseases from the circumstances that produced them they recover, and in a generation or two their diseases are extinguished. There is a resistance to them in the body, which, assisted, may overcome them. Obedient to this analogy, I would not deny hereditary tendencies to rage, to jealousy, to insanity. The mind may be diseased, and through its connection with the body may be propagated in a diseased condition. But this proves nothing against the truth, or rectitude, or wholesomeness of human nature, more than a murrain among sheep establishes the general defect of that creature’s final cause, to produce wool and food for man. We recognize the hereditary defects as diseases, excrescences, perversions of human nature, and treat them as such; not as its normal hereditary and wholesome condition. The real question is, How

* *Orthodoxy: its Truth*, etc., p. 134.

† *Restatement of Christian Doctrine*, p. 219.

deep and how common is this alleged discord? Is it total, or vast, or general? Has it not been immensely exaggerated? Has not the disposition to treat the soul as sick been at least as common an error as to treat the body as sick—and have not both of them been overdosed and overwatched? It is the want of food, and not of medicine, which has impoverished whole races and tribes. Hereditary diseases, prevalent as they are, are not the common causes of physical degeneracy, but bad habits, self-indulgence, poor diet, or hardship and toil. And so of the soul. Its hereditary disorders, not to be denied, are not its chief difficulties, but its present want of light, education, encouragement, confidence, sympathy, and help.” On page 260 he continues: “There is, then, doubtless in accordance with this showing, a real and grand truth in the catholic doctrine of the fall of man in Adam. Adam stood for and represents his race. Any other man in his circumstances would have acted as he acted. It was not Adam’s nature that fell, but merely he himself; that is to say, his nature was no other after his fall than before. It was no more weak than before. For, if stronger before he fell than since, how did he yield so easily to temptation? No! Adam’s nature was illustrated, not changed, by his fall. He was created liable to and certain of his fall. And his fall was simply an exhibition and evidence of his total inability to keep the commandment of God in his own independent strength; that is to say, his intellect and conscience were made so much more powerful than his will that he was constituted to see and feel the obligateness of duties which he had no adequate resolution and power of character to observe and perform.”

This, we must think, is a superficial view, and one which fails entirely to account for well-known facts of human consciousness, not less than it fails to accord with direct teachings of revelation. The universality of a depraved disposition in

man is indisputable and, as discoverable in the earliest infancy, can have no other solution than that of transmission—an hereditary virus, or weakness, or tendency to yield to proffered sin, which did not exist until after the fall. It may not be possible to determine precisely in what the depravity consists, or how the effect is propagated, but the fact is among the most pronounced and indisputable of the facts of human nature. It is not more apparent that it is of the nature of an acorn to produce an oak, or a tiger to be ferocious, than it is for man born of Adam to be depraved. The invariability of the actual effect in each case proclaims the nature cause, and in one no more than the other. The fact that each man sins might be accounted for, it is true, without a depraved nature, even as Adam sinned at first without depravity; possibly even more easily as the case of every successor of the first transgressor—we have the influence of his example, and of the examples, indeed, of all of his successors; but it is not the mere fact of sin that is to be accounted for, but the fact of the invariable and deep-seated impulse to it of which we are conscious, and which is ever bearing us, like a resistless tide, even against our protests and struggles; whose power we constantly feel and are impotent in ourselves to subdue. That we sin is our fault, and we never sin that we do not feel this; but that we are inclined to sin, feel ourselves almost forcibly impelled, we can no more doubt or prevent than we can exist without breathing. Neither habit nor example will account for this. It belongs to our nature. Did it belong to the Adam before the fall? That before the fall he was susceptible to the attractions of evil, that he could feel temptation, that there was that in his nature which might be enticed, cannot be disputed. Otherwise he would have been an unmoral being, and could not have sinned. But is there not reason to believe that the impulses and tendencies of his nature were characteristically to the good, that his spontaneity

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was toward the ought? *That was nature, then.* To sin was possible, but we must believe not unavoidable. There was harmony. The potentates in the new-made soul dwelt together in peace. The lower and baser powers were peacefully submissive to the behests of the higher and nobler. The drift and boom of nature set toward righteousness.

It certainly is not so now. There is a tendency to evil inherent in human nature. To Dr. Bellows's question, "How deep and how common is this alleged discord? Is it total, or vast, or general?" we are constrained to answer: It is so deep that it defies the unaided skill or power of man to eradicate it; so total that it slimes and pollutes every affection and faculty of the human soul; so common and vast and general that not a single child of Adam that ever lived on this planet has escaped it, save the immaculate Son of God. He must, indeed, have lived to little purpose on this globe who has not seen in every life about him, and felt in every fiber of his own being, the world-wide, ages-long, and death-dealing contagion.

No; it is not a murrain that has attacked, here and there, and at intervals, exceptional flocks; not a peculiar fever that has intermittently appeared along the ages in unique conditions; not a corruption of blood that has broken out in special families. It is the disease of Adam's race which has blasted every heart of his long line of degenerate children.

We do not pretend that nothing good and beautiful remains in humanity—no natural sweetnesses; no high and noble virtues; no delicate and Godlike ethicalities and sensibilities; but this only: that they are so rare and so hindered in their growth, and so unique, that when we come upon their bloom they excite our wonder, and when we inquire into their history they are found to be, after all, but instinctive and selfish forms of affection, resembling moral virtues; or, if real, that they are the product of struggle and tedious culture, which have con-

sciously and graciously supplanted or transformed more primitive evils and vices. We are ready to admit that in no case is the depravity total; that there is no desert so bleak and barren that no single flower relieves its waste and arid bosom; that no heart is utterly and totally dead to all forms of goodness. Nay, we are not only disposed to admit this, we rejoice to believe it. Total evil is unknown upon earth, but we find the reason for this not in the fact that our nature does not strongly set toward evil—nay, in its own motions, exclusively—but in the other fact that counter-currents of life and regeneration are let into it from God, in the grace of redemption. Whilst admitting the existence of much that is beautiful and good in the heart of nature, apparently blooming outside the garden of grace and seeming to contradict the idea of a moral fall, we ought not to forget either that many most lovely graces are not virtues; that, on the contrary, ethically they are vices—mere forms of selfishness or, at best, instinctive affections; good, it may be, for their end, but indicating no moral quality. Beneath the most profuse bloom of these natural and instinctive graces, as they are called, many times lies a subsoil of sinful proclivity: a nature estranged from God, dead to all spiritual consciousness; a grave in which decay reigns—utter selfishness and earthiness and lust, the decay of moral death; a sepulcher fair to look upon without, but within full of dead men's bones. Human nature, if ever disposed to obedience unto righteousness, is fallen; for it certainly is not so disposed now. Its spontaneity is to sin.

We must not be supposed, in predicating a fall of human nature in Adam, to believe that some new element was added to it, or some old essence subtracted from it, by which it became a different nature, or man a different being. The fall was a fall from righteousness into sin; a personal fall; a fall in his relations to law: from favor to wrath; from innocence to guilt; from obedience to disobedience; a fall by a rebellious act of

will; a fall out of the normal and right use of his powers into a vile use; a going over of his entire personality from God to self. The act transformed him, as sin must every nature that it touches. God's frown darkened his soul; a sense of guilt corroded his conscience; his jewels were gone; he was in the mire. Where God had been, and conscience and reason the revered and honored sovereigns, self had come, and pride and lust, and they reigned. One act of will had opened the floodgates, and the currents were turned the other way. The fall was complete. The Adam—made in the image of God; made to find his immortal good in obedience; made to live in fellowship with God, and to enjoy God forever—discrowned and debauched, with his head and heart bowed downward to the earth, was driven from his paradise, henceforth to know righteousness but to love sin; to see the good but to pursue the evil; pursue it of preference, but against the goadings of conscience, reproaches of reason, and pains of punishment: an utter fall, into utter sin and utter death, but for interposed redemption.

This was the effect of the Adam's sin upon himself. We come now to consider its effect upon his posterity.

We have already seen that, after he became a sinner, he could have had neither continued life nor posterity.

Our question now is, How, being raised to the privilege of a posterity by redemption, did his fallen condition affect his offspring? Some aspects of this question will be discussed when we come to consider redemption. For the present we assume that the race exists *through* redemption of its head, and *in* redemption for itself; but its natural head, though redeemed, was, as we have seen, fallen. Redemption did not affect either his actual relations to law or his nature. It left him in both his guilt and depravity, only providing pardon for him and the grace of renewal *on conditions*. He was still the fallen Adam as much after redemption as he was before, but help was extended to him.

His children inherited his fallen nature. We have already seen that it is universal. We now say it is by transmission. In whatever it consists it descends from its ancient root. It is not a fall of each individual humanity for itself and by itself, but a fall of all in or, as we prefer, through the head; a derived fall; the polluted fountain uttered a degenerate stream; the corruption and degeneracy flowed all along the lines and touched all the atoms of the issue. From the maimed father came a race of maimed children. The maim was abnormal, alien to the original nature, not of it; but it was interwoven with it, corporate and inseparable in all its parts; a superinduced nature, taking the place of the old. If any choose to call it a habit we do not object, if they have in mind that it is a habit conveyed by generation and inoculating the very germ of the being—an inborn tendency.

We are now prepared for the question, Is the inherited fallen nature guilt? or, in any proper sense of the word, sin? To the question, Is human nature fallen? we have been constrained to answer, against the ancient Pelagian and recent liberal teaching, in the affirmative. To the question now raised, Is inherited degeneracy ground of guilt? we are constrained to answer, against Calvinism, in the negative.

There is, we think, abundant evidence that the two errors have close relation to each other. Augustine was father to Pelagius; Calvin sire of Channing. The extreme view, by a necessary law, produced its opposite. Liberal Christianity, so called, is the maimed offspring of *illiberal* Christianity. The making that evil to be sin which is not sin, on the part of the one, became the reason on the part of the other for calling the evil good. Edwards pronounced inherited depravity damnable; Bellows declares it divine! Beyond all dispute both are wrong. The protest of the one does away with sinfulness of sin; the dogma of the other makes that to be sin which cannot be sin.

The reaction is perfectly natural, but extreme. The denial of guilt to a nature was just; but the assertion that human nature is normal, as well as innocent, is wide of the mark. I scarcely know of forty other pages in all print in which there is such an admixture of truth and error—such brilliant inconsequence—as in the pages between 218 and 260 of Bellows's *Restatement of Christian Doctrine*, unless the exception might be found in Dr. Shedd's article on Original Sin, the very title of which, in its first appearance, "Sin a Nature; That Nature Guilt," was a contradiction. Of the two errors Calvinism is the more damaging to the character of God, Pelagianism is more dangerous to the morality of men; both harmful in the extreme, but both having fundamental truth underlying the error. Pelagianism is superficial, inconsequent, and flippant, its influence weakening to law and encouraging to sin, but in spirit and temper it is humane and merciful; careless of the weightier matters, it is most careful of the mint and cumin of external cultus. Calvinism is profound, logical, and austere; its influence conservative of law and repressive of sin; but in spirit it is severe, inhuman, and unjust, enthroning cruelty and power above equity and love. If the former subverts sovereignty by justifying lawlessness, the latter overthrows it by rendering rebellion more righteous than loyalty. The God of the one is an amusing toy; the Jehovah of the other a frightful Moloch.

The doctrine that the fallen nature carries guilt to all who possess it; that guilt is transmitted from Adam to all his descendants; that we are born in sin and liable to all its penalties; that each child of man brings into the world, as its sad inheritance, the sufficient causes for its eternal damnation; that the sin inherent in its nature is the greatest possible sin, and just reason for its greatest possible condemnation, is so strange a doctrine, so utterly repugnant to human reason—to *a priori* judgment of our intelligence—that it can with difficulty be

imagined that it has ever been entertained by sane men. Yet, upon examination, it is found that it has for its sponsors many among the wisest and best men that have lived along the ages.

Those who contend for the guilt of inherited depravity, or of a nature which fatally tends to sin, which includes almost the entire Church through all the centuries, differ widely among themselves in methods of explaining and defending the doctrine, one class subverting the other. The different theories are thus given by Dr. Hodge:

“1. That which is adopted by Protestants generally, as well Lutherans as Reformed, and also by the great body of the Latin (Roman Catholic) Church is, that in virtue of the union, federal and natural, between Adam and his posterity, his sin, although not their act, is so imputed to them that it is the judicial ground of the penalty threatened against him also coming upon them. This is the doctrine of immediate imputation.

“2. Others, while they admit that a corrupt nature is derived from Adam by all his ordinary posterity, yet deny, first, that this corruption or spiritual death is penal infliction for his sin; and, second, that there is any imputation to Adam's descendants of the guilt of his first sin. All that is really imputed to them is their own inherent hereditary depravity. This is the doctrine of mediate imputation.

“3. Others discard entirely the idea of imputation, so far as Adam's sin is concerned, and refer the hereditary corruption of man to the general law of propagation. Throughout the vegetable and animal kingdoms like begets like. Man is not an exception to that law. Adam, having lost his original righteousness and corrupted his nature by his apostasy, transmits that despoiled and deteriorated nature to all his descendants. To what extent man's nature is injured by the fall is left undetermined by this theory. According to some it is so deteriorated as to be, in the true scriptural sense of the term, spiritually

dead, while according to others it is little, if anything, more than physical infirmity and impaired constitution, which the first parent had transmitted to his children.

“4. Others again adopt the realistic theory, and teach that as generic humanity existed whole and entire in the persons of Adam and Eve their sin was the sin of the entire race. The same numerical, rational, and voluntary substance which acted in the first parents having been communicated to us, their act was as truly and perfectly our act, being the act of our reason and will, as it was their act. It is imputed to us, therefore, not as his, but as our own. We literally sinned in Adam, and consequently the guilt of that sin is our personal guilt, and the consequent corruption of nature is the effect of our own voluntary act.

“5. Others, finally, deny any causal relation, whether logical or natural, whether judicial or physical, between the sin of Adam and the sinfulness of his race. Some who take this ground say that it was a divine constitution, that if Adam sinned all men should sin. The one event was connected with the other only in the divine purpose. Others say that there is no necessity to account for the fact that all men are sinners further than referring it to their liberty of will. Adam sinned, and other men sin. That is all. The one fact is as easily accounted for as the other.”*

The theories all make the sin of Adam, in some form, or for some reason, imputatively the sin of the race descending from him. His guilty act either directly or indirectly inculcates all in a common guilt. To impute means to regard or account something as personal which is not personal, but which is derived by way of another. “The ground of the imputation of Adam’s sin, or the reason why the penalty of his sin has come upon all his posterity, according to the doctrine above stated, is the union between us and Adam. There could, of course, have been no propriety in imputing the sin of one man to another

* Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 192, 193.

unless there were some connection between them to explain and justify such imputation." *

The theory of Augustine, as the most prominent, and as involving in its discussion the discussion of all the rest, may be properly introduced first. It justly takes his name because it undoubtedly originated with him, as well as because through his influence it obtained wide and lasting sway over the Church. The prominence with which Calvin brought it forward in the Reformation period, and its adoption by the family of churches which sprang from him, has associated it with his name, and it is now most generally designated Calvinism. With unimportant variations as formulated in different creeds it is substantially this, as given in the Westminster Confession, under the article, "Of the fall of man, of sin, and of the punishment thereof," and the Assembly Catechism:

"By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

"They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of their sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

"From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

"Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal." †

"The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consisteth

* Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 196.

† *Confession of Faith*, chap. vi, secs. 2, 3, 4, 6.

in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called original sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

"Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.

"The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bondslaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishment in this world and that which is to come." *

"The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections; or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sake, and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments, together with death itself.

"The punishments of sin in the world to come are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell fire forever." †

That we may see with what justice the doctrine is attributable to Augustine a brief quotation only will be necessary:

"As all men have sinned in Adam, they are justly exposed to the vengeance of God, because of this hereditary sin and guilt of sin." ‡

Calvin's view is expressed in these words:

"To remove all uncertainty and misunderstanding on the

* *Larger Catechism*, Answers to Questions 25-27.

† Answers to Questions 28, 29.

‡ Hagenbach, *History of Doctrine*, vol. i, p. 323.

subject let us define original sin. It is not my intention to discuss all the definitions given by writers; I shall only produce one, which I think perfectly consistent with the truth. Original sin, therefore, appears to be an hereditary pravity and corruption of our nature diffused through all the parts of the soul, rendering us obnoxious to the divine wrath, and producing in us those works which the Scripture calls 'works of the flesh.' And this is, indeed, what Paul frequently denominates *sin*. The works which proceed thence, such as adulteries, fornications, thefts, hatreds, murders, revelings, he calls in the same manner 'fruits of sin;' although they are also called 'sins' in many passages of Scripture and even by himself. These two things, therefore, should be distinctly observed: first, that, our nature being so totally vitiated and depraved, we are on account of this corruption considered as convicted and justly condemned in the sight of God, to whom nothing is acceptable but righteousness, innocence, and purity. And this liableness to punishment arises not from the delinquency of another; for when it is said that the sin of Adam renders us obnoxious to the divine judgment it is not to be understood as if we, though innocent, were undeservedly loaded with the guilt of his sin; but because we are all subject to a curse, in consequence of his transgression, he is said therefore to have involved us in guilt. Nevertheless we derived from him not only the punishment, but also the pollution to which the punishment is justly due. Wherefore Augustine, though he frequently calls it the sin of another, the more clearly to indicate its transmission to us by propagation, yet at the same time also asserts it properly to belong to every individual." *

It is hardly necessary that we add further quotations. The advocates of this doctrine are not ashamed of it, nor are they wanting in boldness in its utterance and vindication. From

* Calvin's *Institutes*, book ii, chap. i, sec. 8.

Augustine to Hodge it is fortified by great learning and transcendent genius.

To the first part of the doctrine, namely, that all men are depraved by inheritance from Adam, and by means of his first sin, we have already signified our unqualified assent. To the second part, namely, that our inherited depravity involves us in personal guilt, we shall now proceed to file our objections.

In the discussions of the nature of sin, occupying the earlier pages of this treatise, we have already assigned conclusive reasons for the rejection of the doctrine; reasons showing from the nature of sin itself that it cannot, as involving guilt, be predicated of a nature. We propose now more fully to examine the reasonings of those who assert and defend the dogma.

The precise issue raised is, Does congenital depravity—natural corruption, hereditary proclivity to sin—a fact fully admitted by both parties, affirm guilt of the subject, irrespective of and antecedent to any personal will action, or along with being itself—guilt inherited and transmitted? We deny.

The general ground of our dissent is that the affirmation is in conflict with the clearest dictates of natural justice and *a priori* intuitions of reason, and is alike dishonorable to God and impossible in the nature of things, as it involves that men are made guilty, blameworthy, on account of an event which transpired when as yet they had no existence at all, of any kind; that one man is made guilty on account of another man's act with which he could have no connection whatever, since the act was committed before he existed; and that guilt is transmissible.

The grounds of the protest are so obvious, so accordant with the spontaneous verdicts of all reason, and so apparently fatal to the doctrine, that an explanation, at least, is felt, by even its friends, to be an imperative demand. It is not, if a truth, like

most truths, attractive of confidence. Its speech and countenance are against it.

It is not surprising that, with attempts to make it acceptable, great disharmony should arise among its advocates—absolute conflicts as to the grounds of defense. It could scarcely be otherwise.

It is at once admitted that if there be injustice in fact, and not simply in seeming, the doctrine must be abandoned. Not even its most earnest defenders can continue their adherence in the presence of such a refutation.

Let us examine the several methods of explanation and reconciliation attempted, together with the general supports of the doctrine.

It has been said above that the chief embarrassment arises from its seeming conflict with natural justice. In response to this strong *prima facie* against it, it is argued that an equally strong and obvious reason in its support meets the eye of the reflecting observer as soon as he beholds human society, in the sufferings which, as well as sinfulness, are universal; attacking and destroying infancy as remorselessly as age, suggesting a high displeasure against the species itself. If the injustice of alleging guilt where there has been no crime bears against the doctrine of inherited sin, the no less manifest injustice of punishment of the innocent seems to furnish it support. If it is a maxim of justice that there can be no guilt without personal sin, it is certainly no less a maxim that "there can be no just punishment where there is not personal guilt." The *prima facie* is that all do suffer; it is insisted, therefore, all have sinned. If we admit that all suffering is punishment of the guilty, most certainly the argument is conclusive. Thus it appears that those who contend for and those who oppose the doctrine of inherited sin have, if not precisely the same difficulty to meet, very analogous objections to answer. We have

already shown that all sufferings are not punishments. The reply from our side is complete; it remains that we attend to the manner in which those meet the difficulty who contend for the doctrine.

They rest their defense upon two grounds: first, that the doctrine is expressly taught in the word of God, and that therefore it must be true, whatever seeming objections bear against it; second, that, rightly understood, the apparent objection of injustice does not bear. If they can succeed in making good either of these positions they establish the point in question, or at least remove the objection, and judgment must be in their favor. If a Bible doctrine it is true; and if true it cannot be in conflict with justice; and, reversely, if it collide with justice it cannot be true, and if not true it cannot be sanctioned by the word of God. Let us examine the positions in the reverse order, considering first the explanations of the doctrine which have been adopted to do away with its seeming conflict with justice.

As stated already, the advocates of the doctrine differ widely, and we will add fundamentally, in their modes of defense; and unfortunately for the point which they seek to establish their diverse modes are mutually subversive—each class alternately overthrowing the arguments and reasonings advanced by the other. Dr. Shedd thus laments this fact: “What divisions and controversies exist among those who all alike profess to be Calvinists! How little unanimity exists upon the doctrine among those who all alike repel the charge of Arminianism! One portion or school teach that there is a corrupt nature in man, but deny that it is really and strictly sinful. Another portion or school teach that there is a nature in man to which the epithet *sinful* is properly applied, who yet, when pressed with the inquiry, Is it *crime*, and deserving the wrath of God? shrink from the right answer and return an uncertain sound,

of which the substance is that its contrariety to law, and not its voluntariness, is the essence of sin. Again, there are those who are prepared to fall back on the ground of the elder Calvinists, up to a certain point, but who resolve the whole matter, when pressed by their opponents, into the arbitrary will and sovereignty of God, and deprecate all attempts to construct the doctrine on grounds of reason and philosophy. And, finally, there are some who are inclined not only to the doctrinal statements of Augustine and Owen and the elder Edwards, but also to their method of establishing and defending it, by means of the doctrine of the real oneness of Adam and his posterity in the fall of the human soul." *

We shall find in the progress of the discussion that this is a very gentle putting of the disagreements existing.

The first method of explanation and defense we notice as the most radical is that which is intimated in the citation just made, "the doctrine of the real oneness of Adam and his posterity;" more commonly put as the real presence of the posterity in the Adam when he committed the sin. This, Dr. Shedd asserts, was the doctrine of the elder Calvinists—of Augustine, of Calvin, of Owen, of Edwards, and of all the masters of this faith. With him agree Baird, Landis, and others.

Dr. Hodge positively denies this, and asserts that not one of them ever believed any such doctrine. Those interested to look into the dispute may do so by referring to Shedd, in his treatise, "Sin a Nature, and that Nature Guilt;" and Hodge, in his examination of the essay in his *Princeton Essays*.

Among those who hold to the presence of the race with Adam in the original sin, and hence their common guilt, there is noticeable this difference: Some seem to hold that all human souls were severally present in him, and as separate souls joint in the act, concurring and consenting. This view has not

* *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 223.

found favor, and needs no further notice. It has not the merit of having received the support of a single respectable writer.

The common view is, rather, that we were present in the Adam impersonally, but really and substantially; so that, being one with him, his act is our act. This, Dr. Shedd alleges, was the view of Augustine. The passages which seem most clearly to convict him are *excerpta* from his letter to Jerome: "Teach me, therefore," he says to this eminent prelate, "I entreat you, what I shall teach, teach what I shall hold, and tell me, if souls are created one by one for those who are born, when do they sin in the little ones so that they need remission of sins in baptism as sinning in Adam, from whom the sinful body is propagated? Or, if they do not sin, by what justice of the Creator are they so held responsible for the sin of another, when they are introduced into bodies propagated from him, that they are condemned, if the Church does not relieve them by baptism, although they have no power to decide whether they shall be baptized or not? How can so many thousands of souls, which leave bodies of unbaptized infants, be with any equity condemned—introduced into these bodies for no previous sin of their own, but by the mere will of him who created them to animate these bodies, and foreknew that each of them, for no fault of his own, would die unbaptized? Since, then, we cannot say that God either makes souls sinful by compulsion or punishes them when innocent, and yet are obliged to confess that the souls of the little ones are condemned if they die unbaptized, I beseech you tell me how can this opinion be defended, by which it is believed that souls are not all derived from that one first man, but are newly created for each particular body, as was his for his body." *

"For we were all in that one man who fell into sin through

* Ep. 166, Ad Hieronymum.

the woman, who was made of him before the sin when he, one, corrupted all. The form in which we as individuals live was not yet created and distributed to us severally, but the seminal nature was created from whence we are propagated; which nature itself being by sin vitiated, bound in the chains of death, and justly condemned, man was begotten of man in no different estate."*

Odo, or Oudardus, Archbishop of Cambray, thus states his own as Augustine's view: "Two kinds of sin are spoken of, that of nature, and personal sin. The sin of nature is that with which we are born, and which we derive from Adam, in whom we all sinned. For my mind was in him as a part of the whole species, but not as a person; not in my individual nature, but in the common nature. For the common nature of all human minds in Adam was involved in sin. And thus every human mind is blamable with respect to its nature, although not with respect to its person. Thus the sin by which we sinned in Adam is to me a sin of nature—in Adam a personal sin. In Adam it was more criminal; in me less so; for I, who am, did not sin in him, but that which I am. I did not sin in him, but this essence which I am. I sinned as the genus man, not as the individual Odo. I sinned as a substance, not as a person; and because my substance does not exist but in a person the sin of my substance is the sin of one who is a person, but not a personal sin. For a personal sin is one which I, who am, commit, but this substance which I am does not commit—a sin in which I sin as Odo, and not as the genus man; in which I sin as a person, and not as a nature; but, because there is no person without a nature, the sin of a person is also the sin of a nature, but not a natural sin."†

This is the doctrine of Professor Shedd, in his able essay on

* Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, lib. 13, 14.

† E. Beecher, *Conflict of Ages*, pp. 320, 321.

“Original Sin.” He contends, also, that it is the doctrine of the Westminster Assembly, and of Augustine, Calvin, Owen, and Edwards, from whom he adduces copious extracts in support of his position.

Having quoted from the Assembly’s Catechism, he proceeds:

“Now, it is to be remembered that these men were making distinct and scientific statements, and their language, consequently, is not to be regarded as merely metaphorical. It must, therefore, be understood in the same way that scientific language is always to be understood—taken in its literal meaning, unless a palpable contradiction or absurdity is involved in so doing. In the doctrinal and scientific statement, then, it is affirmed that all men sinned in Adam, and fell with Adam, in his first transgression. This implies and teaches that all men were, in some sense, coexistent in Adam; otherwise they could not have sinned in him. It teaches that all men were in some sense coagent in Adam; otherwise they could not have fallen *with* him. The mode of this coexistence and coagency of the whole human race in the first man, they do not, it is true, attempt to set forth; but their language distinctly implies that they believe there was such a coexistence and coagency, whether it could be explained or not. They regarded Adam not merely as an individual, but as a common person, and having a generic as well as individual character. They taught that he was substantially the race of mankind, and that his whole posterity existed in him. Consequently, whatever befell Adam befell the race. In Adam’s fall the race fell. And what is to be particularly noted is that they did not regard the fall of Adam, considered as an individual, any more guilty than the fall of each and every one of his posterity, or that original sin was any the less guilt in his posterity than it was in him. So far as responsibility was concerned Adam and his posterity were all *alike* guilty of apostasy. They were all involved

in a common condemnation, because they were all *alike* concerned in the fall. The *race* fell in Adam, and consequently each individual of the race was in some mysterious yet real manner existent in this common parent of all.

“This phraseology is not to be understood as implying that the individual is in the germ *as a distinct individual*. Adam, as the generic man, was not a mere receptacle containing millions of separate individuals. The germ is not an aggregation, but a single, simple essence. *As such* it is not yet characterized by individuality. It, however, becomes varied and manifold, by being individualized *in its propagation, or development into a series*. The individual, consequently (with the exception of the first pair, who are immediately created, and are both individual and generic), is always the result of propagation, and not of creation. In the instance of man the creation proper is the origination of the generic species, which species is individualized in its propagation under the preserving and providential (but noncreating) agency of the Creator. The individual, *as such*, is consequently only a subsequent *modus extendi*; the first and antecedent mode being the generic humanity, of which this subsequent serial mode is only another aspect or manifestation. Had the members of the series of human generations existed *in their proper individuality* in the progenitor there would have been no need of the subsequent process of individualization or propagation. The doctrine of traducianism is unquestionably more accordant with that of original sin than that of creationism, and the only reason why Augustine, and others after him, hesitated with regard to its *formal* adoption was its supposed incompatibility with the doctrine of the soul's immateriality and immortality. If, however, the distinction between creation and development be clearly conceived and rigorously observed, it will be seen that there is no danger of materialism in the doctrine of the soul's propagation. For development cannot change the

essence of that which is being developed. It may unfold that, and only that, which is given in creation. Now, granting the creation of the generic man in *his totality of soul and body*, it is plain that his mere individualization by propagation must leave both his physical and spiritual nature as it found them, so far as this distinction between mind and matter is concerned. For matter cannot be converted into mind by mere expansion, and neither can mind be changed into matter by it. Both parts of man will, therefore, preserve their original created qualities and characteristics in this process of propagation, or individualizing of the generic, which is conducted, moreover, beneath the preserving and providential agency of the Creator. That which is flesh will be propagated as *flesh*, and that which is spirit as *spirit*, and this because mere propagation or development cannot *change the kind of essence*. If, therefore, it is conceded that the creation of man was complete, involving the origination from nonentity of the *entire* humanity as a synthesis of matter and mind, flesh and spirit, cannot change the essence upon either side of the complex being, but can only individualize it.

“It is on this ground that they taught that original sin is real sin, is guilt. The sinful nature they held could be properly charged upon every child of Adam as a nature for which he, and not the Creator, was responsible, and which rendered him obnoxious to the eternal displeasure of God, even though, as in the case of infants dying before the dawn of self-consciousness, this nature should never have manifested itself in conscious transgression. Every child of Adam fell from God in Adam, and together with Adam, and therefore is justly chargeable with all that Adam is justly chargeable with, and precisely on the same ground, namely, on the ground that his fall was not necessitated, but self-determined. For the will of Adam was not the will of a single isolated individual merely; it was also, and besides this, the will of the human species—the

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human will generically. If he fell freely, so did his posterity, yet not one after another and each for himself, as the series of individuals in which the one seminal human nature manifested itself were born into the world, but all together, and all at once, in that first transgression, which stands a most awful and pregnant event at the beginning of human history."

That we do not misinterpret this author in supposing him to hold that the nature which was present in Adam was a real objective thing, as distinct from his person, is conclusive from a consultation of chapter iv, in which, among other things, he treats of species, and fully asserts the doctrine of realism. Treating of the word nature, he says: "The word is not expressive of a mere abstraction, but designates an actual thing, an objective reality. Thus the human nature consists of the whole sum of forces which, original in Adam, are perpetuated and flow in generation to his seed. And our oneness of nature does not express the fact merely that we and Adam are alike, but that we are thus alike because the forces that are in us, and make us what we are, were in him, and are numerically the same which in him constituted his nature and gave him his likeness." *

"By birth we acquire a distinct and separate personality, having an identity of its own, of the same grade and degree as was that of Adam's person. But with this distinct personality there is associated a community in Adam's moral nature, by virtue of the continuity of forces flowing from him to us, embracing us in an identity with his nature, and involving our communion in his apostasy from God." †

In the work of Dr. Baird, *The Elohim Revealed*, the doctrine is most explicitly stated and elaborately argued. "The nature of the entire race was created originally in Adam, and is propagated from him by generation, and so descends to all his seed.

* *Dogmatic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 150.

† *Ibid.*, p. 496.

Hence arise two distinct forms of responsibility: the nature being placed under a creative obligation of conformity to the holiness of God's nature, and each several person being in a similar manner held under obligation of personal conformity of affections, thoughts, words, and actions, to the holy requirements of God's law. The apostasy of this nature was the immediate efficient cause in Adam of the act of disobedience, the plucking of the forbidden fruit. Thus there attached to him the double crime of apostasy of his nature and of personal disobedience. The guilt thus incurred attached not only to Adam's person, but to the nature which, in his person, caused the act of transgression. Thus, as the nature flows to all the posterity of Adam, it comes bearing the burden of that initial crime, and characterized by the depravity which was embraced therein."*

"We are not held accountable for Adam's breach of the covenant, in consequence of the transgression respecting the tree; but because of the inscription of the covenant in Adam's nature, and our inbeing in him in whose nature it was inscribed."†

"He and they are one by virtue of a community in a nature which, originally one, in Adam, is communicated to his posterity by generation, and is possessed by them, not, as in the other case, in common and undivided, but distributively and in severalty."‡

"The offense is ours immediately, and not by virtue of any divine agency investing us with it. As the apostle has already shown that, when Adam sinned, all his seed were in him, and so sinned in the very act with him. . . . It is only because truly and immediately ours that a God of infinite truth and justice charges it to us."§

We cannot be doing an injustice to these several authors in representing them as holding the real unity and identity of

P. 246.

† P. 311.

‡ P. 322.

§ P. 422.

Adam and his posterity as to nature—meaning thereby something which constituted objective and numerical unity—and that because of this presence of us with Adam in the transgression, and partaking of it, we became guilty in the same way as he did.

It is exceedingly difficult to understand precisely what is meant by the statement of our real presence with Adam. It does not mean that our bodies and souls were present in him as they are now existing in us. And yet something that is now of us, and the substratum of our personality, was there—that something which makes us men—called human nature. The idea would seem to be that at first there was created a great mass of human nature out of which all human beings were afterward to be made, as many garments are made out of one web of cloth, and that this mass was invested in Adam; that when an individual man is propagated from Adam he has transferred to him a molecule of the original mass, or so many molecules as he is to transmit to future men that are to spring from him, and thus the great mass originally created is to be parceled out and divided up until each one of the posterity shall have received his part; that while in Adam this entire mass of human nature, the as yet impersonal aggregate of the stuff future individual personalities were to be made of, apostatized and became attaint and guilty—the whole and every part of it—so that each molecule as it descends carries the taint and guilt of that first apostasy to the individual personalities of which the molecule becomes the center, nucleus, or basis.

Dr. Hodge so interprets it: "According to this view, humanity is one substance, in which inhere certain forces. This substance was originally in Adam, and has been by propagation communicated to all his descendants, so that the substance, with its forces, which constitutes them what they are, is

numerically the same as that which was in him and made him what he was.

"If there be any other meaning it is so transcendental that we acknowledge our inability to perceive it."*

We do not say that this is Calvinism. Dr. Shedd declares it is, and Dr. Baird, and Dr. Landis, and Dr. Breckenridge, and they quote from all the leading authors from Augustine down to show that such was their doctrine, and that it is true and sound doctrine.† Dr. Hodge declares it a perversion of all the authorities, and quotes profusely to show it.‡

We cannot doubt that both are right. The authors, under the embarrassments of their circumstances in attempting to defend an indefensible point, have doubtless taken contradictory and antagonistic positions. The authorities are pretty evenly balanced, and the same masters are about half the time on one side and half the time on the other.

The question with us, however, is not whether the doctrine above declared is Calvinism, but, Is it true? The men whose names are attached and the authorities cited are high authorities. They at least undertake to sustain the Calvinistic position that all Adam's posterity are guilty of Adam's sin, or guilty by that one sin of Adam. Their explanation is that the posterity were in the Adam, coexisting and coacting; that, therefore, they are guilty; and they assert that in no other way could they be guilty. They are extremely positive upon this point.

Dr. Hodge and the Princeton school at his back assert the doctrine of the guilt of the race, but pronounce the reason assigned by these authors to be wholly without foundation and

* *Biblical Repertory*, April, 1861.

† See *Danville Review*, 1861-62; Shedd's *Essays*; Baird's *Elohim Revealed*; Beecher's *Conflict of Ages*.

‡ See his essays, in volume of *Princeton Essays*, on Imputation and Original Sin; and still later articles in the *Princeton Review*.

utterly false—the grossest kind of error ; and in this we think they are right. His exceptions are taken on several grounds, and most earnestly on the ground that it deserts and surrenders fundamental principles of the Calvinistic system ; but—in every such case—because it is untrue. I quote from his review of Dr. Baird's book in the *Princeton Review*, April, 1860. He is especially severe on Dr. Baird. On page 365 he says: “If there is any meaning in all this we confess ourselves too blind to see it. We have no idea what is meant by ‘the law being addressed to the very substance of the soul’ [the reply here is to the preposterous idea of Dr. Baird, about page 260 of his book, on the subject of a nature sinning, a doctrine in the form in which he expressed it I think never conceived by another mind ; but his remarks are of wide application, hence the extended quotation], or by saying conformity of substance to the image of God is holiness, and the reverse sin.”

“It is,” Dr. Hodge goes on to say, “as unintelligible to us as speaking of the moral character of a tree, or the correct deportment of a house. It has often happened to us in reading German metaphysics not to comprehend at all the meaning of the author ; but we have always had the conviction that he had a meaning. We do not feel thus on the present occasion. The distinction which the author attempts to draw between sinful acts of nature and personal sins is a distinction which means nothing, and on this nothing his whole theory is founded. There are actions, of course, of very different kinds in a creature composed of soul and body ; some of these may properly enough be called natural, and others personal. But this does not apply to moral acts, whether good or evil. . . . There can, indeed, from the very idea of sin, be no *actual* sin which is not personal, because that which acts rationally and by self-determination, two elements essential to actual sin, is a person. *Actual* sin can no more be predicated of a nature as

distinguished from a person than of a house." The criticism is severe, but just. We shall find that his criticisms are no less destructive of the common ground of a real unity of the race in Adam, and their coaction in his sin—the ground so ably defended and constantly assumed by Dr. Shedd and the many great names quoted by him. "This supposition," he says, "that actual sins can be committed by persons before they are persons, that *we* acted thousands of years before *we* existed, is as monstrous a proposition as ever was framed."* "There is no definition of a personal act more precise and generally adopted than an 'act of voluntary self-determination.' Such was apostasy in Adam, and if we performed that act, then we were in him, not by community of nature merely, but personally. Apostasy being an act of self-determination, it can be predicated only of persons; and if the apostasy of Adam can be predicated of us, then we existed thousands of years before we existed at all. If any says he believes this, then, as we think, he deceives himself, and does not understand what he says." How refreshingly the doctor utters himself when he happens to have truth on his side! "It is assumed that innate, hereditary depravity cannot have the nature of sin in it unless it be self-originated [the very position of Dr. Shedd]; hence some assume that we existed in a former state, when, by an act of self-determination, we depraved our own nature. Others assume that humanity is a person, or that personality can be predicated of human nature as a generic life, and that individuals are the forms in which its comprehensive personality is revealed; a conception as incongruous as the hundred-headed idol of the Hindus."

In the following trenchant manner he knocks on the head the whole theory of the unity of the race in Adam:

"The principle here involved is asserted to be true in its

* P. 356.

application to all the genera and species of plants and animals. The lion of to-day is the same numerical substance with the lion first created; the oak of to-day is the same numerically as the original oak in Eden. What is meant by this? We take up an acorn in the forest—in what sense is it identical with the first created oak? Not in the matter of which it is composed, for that is derived from the earth and the atmosphere; not in its chemical properties, for they inhere in the matter, or result from its combinations. These properties are doubtless the same in kind with those belonging to the first acorn, but they are not numerically the same. . . . The realistic hypothesis of the objective reality of genera and species is not only purely gratuitous, but it overlooks the continued presence and agency of God in nature. The development of a plant and the growth of an animal body are not to be referred to blind forces inherent in matter, or in any substance, material or immaterial, but to the omnipresent Spirit of God.”

Thus the theologians of Princeton repudiate this theory entirely as baseless, repugnant to sound philosophy, and as furnishing no explanation of the doctrine of original sin. The fact which serves as its foundation is no fact. Realism, which held to the objective reality of what was indicated by universal terms, is an exploded myth of the mediæval ages; universal terms, not things which have an objective existence, but simply subjective conceptions of the mind employing them. There is a conceptual, or ideal, human nature abstract of real man, and it is not an objective thing, but only an idea, having no other existence except the unsubstantial form of a subjective conception. Adam’s human nature was a subjective idea of the divine mind until it became a reality in the real Adam. The human nature of every other man, likewise, had no existence until it existed with and in him. Millions of similar men, with a similar nature, existed before him, but his own nature

was not until he, by existing, caused it to exist, an ideal, and not a real, thing. He was in Adam in this sense only as the effect is in the cause; as there was in Adam the power to produce him, not as something already existing; as the ocean steamer is in the man who makes it. So that to charge human nature, separate from personality, with being tainted and guilty is the same as saying that something is tainted and guilty which has no being at all in reality, but only in imagination; as pure a nothing as a mountain of gold or a flying man—a myth!

But were the fact as alleged, that is, had there been co-existence of substance, it would add nothing to that for which it is introduced. It is relied on to explain the doctrine of original sin; that is, to show how in Adam we all sinned and became justly deserving of punishment. The difficulty to be overcome is that we had no participation whatever in Adam's sin, and cannot have a participation in his guilt and punishment; that we had no more connection with it than we had with the sin of Satan, and can, therefore, be no more justly amenable in the one case than we could in the other.

The ground of the objection is tacitly admitted: that to become guilty it is requisite that we should have some real connection with that which is the occasion of guilt. This enforces conviction with all the authority of an intuition, as we shall see throughout the discussion.

If by being present with Adam the propounder meant that each of the human race was personally and consciously present, giving his free consent to the act of transgression, acting as a will and intelligently, then it would serve the purpose for which it is introduced; that is, it would prove the act of transgression to be the individual act of each and the common act of all. One hand plucked the fruit, but all the souls said Amen! Doubtless, in such a case, the sin, guilt, and punishment would be common and individual; the moral act—which is the sin,

lying back of the external act, which was performed by Adam alone—being the common act of all and the individual act of each.

But that is not what the theorist means; indeed, it is what he expressly denies. We were present, but not in that manner. We were present as parts of one substance, but not as intelligences and wills; we were impersonally present; the stuff out of which we were afterward to be manufactured into persons was present. There was but one will present. That was Adam's, but that will wrought for all the substance; and through it the substance all became guilty! Or, what is still more occult, the substance itself acted! The author who announces the theory most fully holds that human nature apostatized before Adam personally sinned, and that this apostasy, which was the apostasy of all, led to Adam's sin, as it leads to our sin; and that, indeed, no personal sin ever could have occurred if the nature had not first apostatized.

"The sin was the apostasy of man's nature from God; apostasy by the force of which Adam was impelled into the act of transgression as an inevitable consequence of the state of heart constituted by the apostasy." *

The principle that community in a propagated nature constitutes such a unity or oneness as immediately involves the possessors in all the relations, moral and legal, of that nature in the progenitor whence it springs, which underlies this whole theory, is thus dispatched by Dr. Hodge: "This is a principle of wide application. It cannot be taken up and laid aside at pleasure. If community of nature involves community in guilt, and pollution for acts of nature, then it must be for all the acts of that nature. It is purely arbitrary and contradictory to confine it to one of these acts to the exclusion of all others. If in virtue of community of nature we are agents in Adam's first

* P. 97.

sin of nature, and morally chargeable with its criminality, then we are morally chargeable with all his moral acts. If the ground of imputation of his guilt is the covenant then it is limited to his first sin, but if that ground be community of nature it must extend to all his sins. . . . Community of nature makes us morally responsible for all the moral acts of our progenitor. But what is to limit the application of the principle to our original progenitor? What is the specific difference between our natural relation to Adam and our natural relation to Noah? Again, what difference as to community of nature is there between our relation to Adam and the relation of the Hebrews to Abraham? If we, on the ground of that community, are responsible for all Adam's moral acts, why are not the Hebrews responsible for all the acts of Abraham? Nay, why are not we responsible for the acts of our immediate progenitors, and of all our progenitors back to Adam? What is to hinder our being morally chargeable with every act ever committed by all our ancestors?"

We quote from the reviewer precisely the objection we should put ourselves. It is unquestionably well taken, and is by no means put in the most objectionable form of which it is capable.

Were coexistence of the entire race in Adam, as mere substance, essence or matter, if the thing be conceivable, allowed, it would be of no avail to establish guilt; and if it were further allowed that by the sinful act of the Adam the entire mass was in some mysterious manner addled, corrupted, polluted, or whatsoever you may call it, it would still be of no avail to convict the after personalities, invested with it by propagation, of guilt. Until it is made out that sin is a physical quality the only possible ground of guilt must be in something else than a nature or essence. No sane writer has ever attempted to find it in the absence of will, or resident anywhere else but in will.

Allow, for the sake of the argument, the coexistence of the

very essence of each human soul in and with Adam, and upon this admission predicate of them the guilt of his sin. The question at once arises, Upon what ground, and of what, are they guilty? Is it said, Of Adam's act of sin? But how comes it that Adam's act is ground of guilt to them? Was Adam's act their act? It is conceded that it was not, since it is agreed that as persons they did not exist and therefore could not act. But if, as appears, the matter of blame was something with which by reason of nonexistence they could have no connection, it must be impossible that they should participate in the blame. To blame them is to blame them for an act performed by another person, and which transpired thousands of years before they had a personal and responsible existence, and the knowledge of which was first brought to them in the form of an indictment. The supposition is that of a madman; guilt could as reasonably, and on precisely the same ground, be predicated of any and all misfortunes and injuries which one being receives from another by virtue of coexistence. It reverses all ideas of justice and subverts all moral distinctions. It is an impossible conceit to a rational being that blame should attach to a substance, or to a person, on account of a substance with which his connection is wholly involuntary. The words may be strung together in propositional forms, and men under stress of preconceived theories may imagine that they conceive a meaning to them, and a truth in them, but they do violence to the laws of thought, and whenever presented to minds free from disguises meet a prompt and spontaneous resistance.

An examination of all the writers who have attempted to identify the race with Adam's sin on account of coexistence will show that they are constantly assuming coaction as well, and this because they know that coaction must be hypothecated in order to guilt.

Dr. Shedd expressly admits that in order to guilt there must be personal will action. "The doctrine of the divine anger is tenable only on the supposition that the objects upon which it expresses itself are really ill-deserving—are really criminal. It becomes necessary, therefore, to show that the sinful nature of man, on account of which he becomes a child of wrath, and obnoxious to the divine anger, is a guilty nature."*

Following this extract in his essay is an elaborate argument to show that the sinful nature is in the will, and is originated by the will, and hence its guilt; and that its guilt may be predicated of each man he connects the action of each man's will with its origination; men are, therefore, individually guilty in the matter of their sinful nature because, and only because, they participated in the act of will which originated it. He many times affirms there can be no other ground of guilt. More than presence of a common nature or substance is predicated—common will action, in its deepest and most primitive form. Of the Westminster Assembly he asserts this was their view, and scientifically expressed in the Creed. "Every child of Adam fell from God, in Adam, and together with Adam, and therefore is justly chargeable with all that Adam is justly chargeable with, and precisely on the same ground, namely, on the ground that his fall was not necessitated, but self-determined. For the will of Adam was not the will of a single, isolated individual merely; it was also, and besides this, the will of the human species—the human will generically. If he fell freely, so did his posterity, yet not one after another, and each for himself, as the series of individuals in which the one seminal human nature manifested itself were born into the world, but all together and all at once, in that first transgression, which stands a most awful and awfully pregnant event in the beginning of human history."†

* P. 237.

† P. 260.

“The aim of the Westminster symbol, accordingly, and, it may be added, of all the creeds on the Augustinian side of the controversy, was to combine two elements, each having truth in it: to teach the fall of the human race as a unity, and at the same time recognize the existence, freedom, and guilt of the individual in the fall. Accordingly they locate the individual in Adam, and make him, in some mysterious, but real, manner, a responsible partaker in Adam’s sin—a guilty sharer, and in some solid sense of the word coagent in common apostasy.” *

He quotes from Augustine, Calvin, Owen, and others to show that they held this view. He concludes the discussion with these words: “We know of no other theory that does not in the end either reduce sin to a minimum, by recognizing no sin but that of sinful volition, or else, while asserting a sinful nature, does it at the expense of human freedom and responsibility.” †

The theory of Professor Shedd is that all sin has its origin in will. But he holds that will often acts unconsciously, and therefore sin may be originated by an act of will entirely beyond our consciousness—that this, indeed, was so with regard to original sin. He holds that the will is in some sense double; consisting first of a power, the very central power of our being, to choose a nature, or what Nathaniel Taylor calls a ruling purpose; and then a power to make separate individual choices; as, for instance, a man primarily by this first will determines upon self as the law of his life; having so determined, all his after separate volitions will take their rise from this first and highest act of will, and will derive their moral character from it. This primary act carries his moral nature with it; and when once the primary determination has been taken it is forever irrevocable, if wrong; the choice becomes a nature, originated, it is true, by the will, but afterward unchangeable

* Pp. 260, 261.

† P. 270.

by the same power! This primary determination to a wrong end is original sin, and dates anterior to any conscious personal act of separate individual choice. He supposes it to have transpired with regard to every human being in Eden and in Adam! That then your will and mine, in some mysterious manner, went astray, in consequence of which all our subsequent acts of will go astray also—the effect of that primary estrangement; and for this primary estrangement we are guilty because it is product of will.

The first thing noticeable here is the inconsistency of ranking this as an Augustinian or Calvinistic view, with which it is in direct and violent antagonism; they holding that we are guilty for Adam's sin, this teaching that we are guilty for our own—as opposite positions as possible; they teaching that our depravity is our sin—contradicting themselves also, this teaching that sin is our act, and not our depravity. The resemblance in the theories is that they locate sin at the very starting point of our being: one in our very generation, the other in an act of will which unconsciously transpires immediately following our generation; the act of will superinduced by what is given in our generation. This is called original sin, not, as the older theorists teach, because it was Adam's first, and not because it is something given in generation, but because it begins, or rather takes its rise in us, at the very fountain head of our being, and from a nature transmitted to us; not the nature, but from the nature.

The plausibility of the theory arises from the real truth which underlies it: in the proposition that sin is an act of will; that our sin, therefore, begins when we begin to sinfully act. This is truth, and it is fatal to the whole scheme which imputes guilt to us for Adam's sin. It is rank heresy to the system it is invented to support, as we shall show in our strictures.

The fault of the theory is that it locates sin at an impossible

period ; it supposes us to act sinfully when we could not act at all. Its error is not that it imputes Adam's sin to us—and therefore it comes not under the general category which we are here considering—but that it makes our sin to arise at the fountain head of our being, where, as we shall see, the capacity for it does not exist. It may be true, as it assumes, that acts of will antedate consciousness, and transpire unnoticed by the mind willing, but such acts of will cannot possess the quality of sin.

What is that act of will that includes or constitutes sin ? It must be answered by all that it is that act of will which determines upon a wrong action or feeling with respect to law ; a transgression of law which ought to be obeyed. But does this exhaust the whole idea ? Or, in order that the act of will may have the quality of sin, is it not presupposed that the party held knew the law and perceived the obligation ? Can we predicate sin where there is no intelligence ? A tiger acts when he devours a human being, but does he sin ? Why not ? The answer is plain : because he lacks the intelligence which renders him capable of a moral act—capable of knowing law and feeling obligation ; conditions indispensable to moral quality. But has the newborn human child any such intelligence ? Does it perceive the distinction between right and wrong ? Does it feel the force of moral obligation ? Does it intelligently will ? Deprive a man of his intelligence, his moral power of discerning between right and wrong ; reduce him to the plane of a nonrational creature : could he then be held by law ? Do men ever conceive of such as accountable ? Can they so regard him ? Was law ever made for such ? Is an infant rational ? It will be ; is it the day it is placed in the mother's arms ? To propound these questions is to answer them.

We all know that in the child are the rudiments of a moral nature, but, as yet, no capacity for moral action ; the power, it

may be, to will and to think and to feel, but not the power to will, think, or feel morally. To impute moral quality to its acts is as irrational as to impute it to the freaks of lightning or caprices of the wind; there is really no more proper intelligence in the one than in the other.

That an act of will is wrong, that is, contrary to law, is not what alone constitutes the person a sinner, but that it is known by the person who commits it to be wrong; that he commits it with the feeling that it is wrong. This is a point which surely need not be discussed here. The seat of the morality is the will acting understandingly—the intention. “As a man thinketh [purposeth] in his heart, so is he.”

Thus, if it were allowed that action of will commences long before consciousness, with the very dawn of being, and wrong action, as to the law governing wills; if it could be shown that even thus early the infant will acts selfward and not Godward, it proves nothing as to moral quality, furnishes no basis for the charge of sin; since the wrong action is not moral action, because not rational, and the wrong quality not moral quality, which can only attach to moral action!

The theory assumes that the great radical action of will transpired in Adam. This has been shown to be absurd, inasmuch as the will was not existing in Adam—that is, the will of non-existing posterity. If it should be assumed that it acted in the infant the moment it became an existence the difficulty remains, in all its force, that in an infant there can be no moral will. Allow its tendency to self, yet it is an irrational tendency—as much so as in the case of any instinct—and can have no more elements of morality in it than any other case of instinctive action. The whole affectional nature moves indeed wrong, but not morally so. The nature is depraved in its central powers, but not guilty.

Standing in close proximity to this, but radically different

from it, is the theory of Coleridge, substantially accepted by Professor Shedd, and, as we shall see, by Dr. Taylor, of New Haven. As we understand it, it is this—and we must bear with us the recollection that in this case, as in those already referred to, the design of the theory is to show how we are justly held for original sin: that the proper seat of sin is the will; in other words, that in all cases it is the action of a personal will—precisely the ground we have taken; that, therefore, our original sin consists in an action of our will, but that our wills act as soon as we exist, and act wrong; that, therefore, our sin dates back to the very dawn of our being—even before consciousness itself; we sin before we know it, or, indeed, before we know anything. The theory, it would seem sometimes, rests upon realism, and supposes a coaction of our wills with Adam. This is undoubtedly Professor Shedd's view. We doubt whether Coleridge went so far. His statement will be found in volume i, pages 269 to 289, *Aids to Reflection*, containing his strictures on Jeremy Taylor's *Doctrines of Original Sin*. We cannot quote him in full. Let the student refer to him. Dr. Shedd says:

“In regard to the first point, the position taken is that the sinful nature is in the will, and is the product of the will. We say that it is in the will, in contradistinction to the physical nature of man. Our statement of the doctrine of original sin makes it consist in the deprivation of man's sensuous nature merely. In this case the will is conceived to be extraneous to this corrupted nature, and merely the executor of it. Original sin, in this case, is not in the voluntary part of man, but in the involuntary part of him; and guilt cleaves to him when the voluntary part executes the promptings of the involuntary part; and guilt does not cleave to him until this does take place. The adherents of this view insist (and properly, too, if the statement is correct) that the term ‘sinful,’ in the sense of

guilty or criminal, cannot be applied to this depraved physical nature—to this (so-called) original sin.

“In opposition to this view we affirm that original sin does not consist in the depravation of man’s sensuous or physical nature, but *in the depravation of the will itself*. The corruption of the physical nature of man is one of the consequences of original sin, but not original sin itself. This is depravation of a far deeper and more central faculty than that of sense—a corruption of the voluntary power itself. It is because the human *will*—the *governing* power of the soul—first fell away from God that the other faculties of man are in the condition they are in, that the affections are carnal, that the understanding is darkened, that the physical nature is depraved; and these effects of apostasy should never be put in the place of their cause—of that corruption of the will which is the origin of them all.

“But the examination of a single instance of the gratification of a sensuous propensity is enough to show that sin lies elsewhere than in the physical nature. A man, we will suppose, gratifies the sensuous craving for strong drink. The sin in this case does not lie in the craving of the sensuous nature, corrupt though it be. The sin in the case lies further back, in the will; and, be it observed, not solely in that particular volition of the will by which the act of drinking was performed, but ultimately in that *abiding state* of the will—that *selfishness* or *selfish motive* in the will—which prompted and permitted the volition. Here, as in every instance, we are led back to a sinful nature as the essence of sin; and this nature we find in the will itself; we find it to be a particular state of the will itself.

“But, besides saying that this sinful nature is in the will, we have said furthermore that it is the product of the will. By this we mean that the efficient producing author of this sinful

nature is the will itself; in other words, that this nature is *self-willed*, a *self-determined* nature.

“Here, then, we have a depraved nature, and a depraved nature that is guilt, because it is a self-originated nature. Here, then, is the child of wrath. Were this nature created and put in man, as an intellectual nature, or as a particular temperament, or put in him by the Creator of all things, it would not be a responsible and guilty nature, nor would man be a child of wrath. But it does not thus originate. It has its origin in the free and responsible use of that voluntary power which God has created and planted in the human soul, as its most central, most mysterious, and most hazardous endowment. It is a self-determined nature—a *nature originated in a will and by a will.*”

Perhaps no writer has attempted to give the philosophy of original sin so directly as this author. His theory is summed up in these several positions: first, original sin (all sin) has its location in the will; second, it is produced by the will as a *self-determined power*. The correctness of these positions cannot be questioned. They are precisely the positions we should assume. He then proceeds to define what he means by the will, having made it the seat and author of original sin: “In saying, therefore, that the sinful nature of man is the product of the will we do not mean to teach that it has its origin in the will considered as a faculty of choices or particular volitions. We no more believe that original sin was produced by a volition than that it can be destroyed by one. And if we can have no idea of the will except as a faculty of single choices, and no idea of voluntary actions except such as we are conscious of in our volitions and resolutions, then we grant that the sinful nature must be referred to some other producing cause than the human will, and that the epithets ‘self-determined’ and ‘self-originated’ cannot be applied to it.

“But it seems to us that we have a fuller and more adequate idea of the voluntary power in man than this comes to. It seems to us that our idea of the human will is by no means exhausted of its contents when we have taken into view merely the ability which a man has to regulate his conduct in a particular instance. It seems to us that we do believe in the existence of a controlling power in the soul that is far more central and profound than the quite superficial faculty by which we regulate the movements of our lives outwardly, or inwardly summon up our energies to the performance of particular acts. It seems to us that by the will is meant a voluntary power that lies at the very center of the soul, and whose movements consist, not so much in choosing and refusing, in reference to particular circumstances, as in *determining the whole man with reference to some great and ultimate end of living*. The characteristic of the will proper, as distinguished from the voluntary faculty, is *determination of the whole being to an ultimate end*, rather than selection of means attaining that end in a particular case. (This distinction between the will proper and the faculty of choices is marked in Latin by the words *voluntas* and *arbitrium*, and in that one of the modern tongues whose vocabulary for philosophy is the richest of all by the two words *Wille* and *Willkühr*.) The difference between the voluntary and volitional power—between the will proper and the faculty of choices—may be seen by considering a particular instance of the exercise of the latter. Suppose that a man chooses to indulge one of his appetites in a particular instance—the appetite for alcoholic stimulus, for example—and that he actually does gratify it. In this instance he puts forth one single volition and performs one particular act. By an act of the faculty of choices, of which he is distinctly conscious, and over which he has arbitrary power, he drinks and gratifies his appetite. But why does he thus choose this particular instance?

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In other words, is there not deeper ground for this single volition? Is not this particular act of choice determined by a far deeper and preexisting *determination of his whole inward being* to self, as an ultimate end of being? And now, if the will should be widened out and deepened so as to contain this whole inward state of the man—the entire *tendency* of the soul to self and sin—is it not plain that it would be a very different power from that which puts forth the particular volition? Would not the will, as thus conceived, cover a wider surface of the soul, and reach down to a far deeper depth in it, than that faculty of single choices which covers but a single point on the surface, and never goes below the surface? Would not a faculty comprehensive enough to include the *whole* man, and sufficiently deep and central to be the origin and basis of a *nature*, a *character*, a *permanent moral state*, be a very different faculty from that volitional power whose activity is merely on the surface, and whose products are single resolutions and transient volitions?

“Now, by the will we mean such a faculty. We mean by it voluntary power that lies at the very foundation of the human soul, constituting its central, active principle, containing the whole moral state, and all the moral affections. We mean by it a voluntary power that carries the *whole* inward being along with it when it moves; a power, in short, which is the man himself—the *ego*, the *person*.

“The will, as thus defined, we affirm to be the responsible and guilty author of the sinful nature. *Indeed, this sinful nature is nothing more nor less than the state of the will; nothing more nor less than its constant and total determination to self as the ultimate end of living.* This voluntary power lying at the bottom of the soul, as its elementary base, and carrying all the faculties and powers of the man along with it, whenever it moves and wherever it goes, has turned away from God, as an ultimate

end; and this self-direction—the permanent and entire determination of self—this *state* of the will—is the sinful nature of man.”

That the precise view of the author may be seen it may be proper to add, before we proceed to examine his statements, still other positions. That act of the will which he makes the ground of original sin is the determination of the will to self as the ultimate end of life. This he holds to be the movement of the whole nature toward self, and away from God—apostasy. This primary and most central movement revolutionizes the moral nature and enthrones a second, a perverted nature, which now becomes dominant and permanent, out of which all subsequent separate volitions flow. This is the sinful nature. It involves guilt because it is produced by the primary self-determined action of the will; self-superinduced; not entailed—not inherited. Each soul is its author in itself—so that each soul is guilty for itself and not for another. He most explicitly objects to all transfer of guilt. After the primary movement of the will toward self it moves freely forever in that direction. All after separate choices are free choices, but inevitably toward self; inasmuch as the will has no power of self-regeneration or recovery from its fall, which would be to choose against its permanent choice—to act virtuously when it has become wholly sinful.

Having established that acts of will transpire often without our being conscious of them, he holds that this great act of apostasy transpired before we were conscious of it; and in proof alleges that our first consciousness is of guilt, which involves that we were sinners before we were conscious of our act of sin. He then proceeds to show that the act of will by which we apostatized transpired in the garden of Eden, so that our guilt antedates our birth. The argument is very compact, and contains so much of truth as renders it exceedingly plausible, and to the unlearned quite forcible.

Enough has been said already to show the utter untenability of the final position, that the act of the apostasy of our wills occurred in the garden of Eden. This is the weak point of the theory, and is fatal to the whole argument of the learned author. If it were all admitted but this one point it fails entirely to answer the purpose for which it was produced, namely, to prove that we are born guilty. If this point were allowed it would favor rather the theory of Edward Beecher than the common Calvinistic view.

But let us search into its general contents. It is undoubtedly correct in locating sin in the individual will. But this is a fatal admission to the doctrine of original sin, as we have abundantly shown, since acts of will must transpire after wills exist and become competent to action. What is denominated the depraved state of the will, its disposition, is admitted by the author to be the product of the will in its primary choice; a self-chosen, self-determined nature—self-originated; but this is the same as asserting that original sin is not innate, but produced by after action—unless, as has been shown to be impossible, the will really existed and acted before the person existed.

If we suppose original sin to commence with the first act of the infant will which, from some cause, is selfish and wrong, then the following difficulties are insuperable.

Dr. Shedd is careful to state that it was not mere presence of substance but was also coaction of will—and yet he admits that there was but one will that acted: “The will of the whole species, including the will of every individual within it, fell in the first man.” He admits that we were not conscious of the act, and makes an extended and very able argument to show that wills often act unconsciously. But his argument does not touch the point of our difficulty. Dr. Hodge discards the hypothesis on two grounds: that it is false in philosophy, and

a betrayal of the doctrine it is invented to serve—the Calvinistic theory. We discard it as false in fact, and of no service at all to the point it is supposed to establish—namely, our guilt in the matter of the Adam's act.

The same objection so trenchantly made by Dr. Hodge against the realism of Dr. Baird bears with all its force against Dr. Shedd. His theory of coaction of will rests upon the assumption of coexistence of being. But this is utterly without foundation. The superstructure built upon it stands upon nothing—or falsehood, which is worse than nothing. He predicates coaction of a factor which exists only in his imagination; and upon the basis of the action of this shadowy nothing he founds his accusation of guilt against the human race. The cofactor whom he indicts has no existence and never did exist.

But if it were true, as he assumes, that there was such a coexistence, it was of such a kind as, according to his own showing, precludes coaction in such a form as to become ground of personal guilt. He predicates a generic coexistence and a generic coaction. What does he mean? By generic coexistence he must mean, in some sort, the coexistence of the essence of human nature in the essence of Adam. That essence must have existed as personal or impersonal. If impersonal it could not act personally; and, since nothing but a person can act responsibly, it could not be responsible or guilty. If personal, then each person of the race was present personally in Adam; and if they acted responsibly they personally acted—acted as discrete wills and not as a generic will, and then they are guilty, not for the Adam's sin, but each person for his own sin. Adam's hand plucked the fruit, but it was the instrument, not of his will alone, but of each several will of the entire race, each will acting with the same freedom as Adam himself possessed, and under the same conditions of moral obligation. It is but a

modification of the doctrine of the preexistence of souls, in which state they sinned, by consequence of which they enter this life as guilty, and a much less plausible form of it than that first held by Origen and of late defended by Edward Beecher, in this country, and Müller, of Germany.

If Dr. Shedd imagines that he has any other meaning for the words generic will—"the will of the whole species, generically including the will of every individual within it"—let him try to construe his phrase; he will find that the words are meaningless.

Let us see how this is: A will acted in Eden. Whose will? A generic will, it is answered. That is, everybody's will. Can you separate in your thought a will from a person, so as that the will may be present and act when the person whose will it is is not present and not even existing? There was a person present in Eden and acting in the transgression; the act was a will act. Whose will act? There was but one person there, Dr. Shedd says, and yet he declares that that act of will was the will of each individual of unborn generations acting—your will and my will; that is, our wills acted when we did not exist. For that act of will, which was not mine personally, since he says I did not personally exist, he brings me in personally guilty. I am condemned for what I never did, but another person did, long before I had being—my will being present, though I was not; and my will acting, though I had no existence, at the time of the transaction.

Life is permanent—lives perish. The life that was created and shrined in Adam, and which by transmission or expansion has appeared along the ages, and which now pulsates in all human veins, is an indiscerptible unit—the same life. The millions of organisms into which it has flowed, and in which it has become individualized, have been utterly distinct from each other, having no common elements, but only resembling

substance and arrangement, but the life itself has been common and perpetual. It has never intermitted. An unbroken stream extends from the first to the last man; that mysterious something called life, which beats in my heart and yours to-day, thrilled in Adam's veins when he opened his eyes in the unblighted Eden. The individuals die, and the atomic lives expire, but the life remains. This, then, is one thing we have in common with Adam. No one can tell what it is. We call it, in our blindness, a force. It pertains to matter—is a created quality.

In addition to natural life, or possibly having some occult identity with it, is a spiritual entity in man. As to its origin there are two theories. One is known as creationism, the other as traducianism. The former supposes that each human soul is a distinct creation; that when natural life is propagated, at some moment the new life center, probably before birth, when it has elaborated its organism and is about to become a differentiated life, becomes the home of a new creation—a soul. The latter holds that the soul entity, in some occult manner propagated with the natural life, is the projection of the human parent. It is no objection to this view that we cannot understand how this might be. The whole subject is too deep for us—eludes our gross apprehension. The soul soon discovers itself, but neither knows nor tells the mystery of its origin. We incline to the hypothesis of its propagation, and so some occult unity of human souls as of human life.

Supposing these wonderful unities, do they reflect any light on the problem of human sin? It has been so supposed. Identity of the soul essence of the man of to-day with the man of Eden is conceived to connect the man of to-day with the sin of Eden. If sin were attribute of an essence this might be conceivable, but as it is the quality of an act of a personal will, with relation to law, it does not appear how it might be.

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The fact of identity of life and soul essence, if established, might explain effects in the nature: tendencies—abnormal conditions—common phenomena in the physical, mental, and moral nature. These would seem to be propagated. Like would beget like. Universal depravity may be thus explained as a fact of the life force or essence—disease in the whole physical and spiritual nature—carried along from generation to generation. We have no means of knowing how the fact of sin does affect the being that sins, but it is conceivable that it may attack his essence in some manner, producing permanent effects of disorder in it. Metaphysical causes do affect substances. But, even supposing such effects wrought in the nature by sin, the effects are not the sin.

Of entity, substance, essence, of any kind, we know but little, and can predicate but little. So far as we can know anything, we know that form is form of a reality—being; we call it substance. So of thought and will. We cannot see it as we do form; but we know that it has a home; it is thought and will of some real being; some causational center. We cannot see its shape or form; or touch or weigh it; or dissect it as we can solids, and even gases or electricity; but we are certain that thought, emotion, and will are facts which as clearly point to a real being as do form and weight and hardness. We know not how a sinful volition of such a spiritual being may leave its mark on the very essence itself—how it may affect its powers. There are effects which lie beyond our ken. But if such effects are possible they might explain how degeneracy could be propagated. We see the fact that it is, but do not see the how—do not know exactly what it is, but only that it is abnormal condition of the being; but whatever it is, and however radical or superficial, we know that it is but the effect of sin, not sin itself.

By sin Adam became subject to attainder; his life was

forfeit, his estate confiscate. Redemption supervened for his restoration; but while it arrested process of law, and provided pardon, it did not rehabilitate him. It left him under the cloud of death and degeneracy during his earthly life, as the sad memorial of his sin; stains which even pardon and restored favor did not, and do never, remove; stains which reach over to his children along all the lines of their generation, reminding them of the disastrous sin of their primitive ancestor. The race blood is attaint. But these effects of his sin, carried over under redemption, are not its penalties. It is a perversion of language to call them so.

The case is that of a worthy nobleman who by treason forfeits his life and in madness burns up the titles to his estates and houses; who at the time is without heirs, but is in wedlock, and his wife is partner of his crime. The law attaches dishonor and death to their crime. But the king, for some consideration—say respect to the family name, or the intercession of the queen, or any of a thousand amiable reasons—is induced or disposed to relax the law, or restrain its penalty, but he will do so in such manner as not to weaken the force of law or minify the culprit's sense of his crime. He will be gracious, but also just to his own rights; he will spare, but he will effectually admonish. He calls his subject before him, and sets forth the law and its penalty, and makes this announcement: Your crime has forfeited your life, and your madness has destroyed your estate. *They were yours; I gave them to you; you have forfeited them; I am disposed to be merciful to you. This I will do: I will suspend the penalty which you have incurred; I will give you time to repent; and on certain conditions I will pardon you and restore the privileges which you have forfeited, or their equivalents; but your restoration will be in such form as always to remind you of your crime and of my clemency; the memorials of these shall always go with*

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you, and be perpetuated with all your descendants. Your estates, that would have descended to them by inheritance, will henceforth come to them by grace, and on conditions. Had you been loyal they would have been born to honor and emoluments. They will now be born to shame and poverty. *This will be known as the effect of your crime*; but the shame and poverty and death to which your crime subjects them, while it will be a perpetual memorial of your guilt, will denote nothing of guilt in them; they shall know that you have ruined them; I am their friend and saviour; the curse that you have entailed as inheritance I will turn to blessing; the inheritance you have wasted I will restore. They will suffer, but only that by way of suffering I may restore them. The shame and poverty and death to which they shall be born will answer to no claim of law, but to the reverberation of the blow that falls upon your guilty head.

Thus it seems that the evils of degeneracy are in the world by sin, but are concomitants of an economy of mercy; memorials of sin, but not less memorials of grace.

Unity of substance, or occult connection of being, in some intimate manner, as to mere essence, whether of spirit or matter, while it might suffice to account for certain phenomena, could not go beyond that. Moral character differs from moral nature. The latter may be propagated or inherited, the former cannot; the nature may be common to two or to many, the character must be personal and singular. The moral nature may exist without character; may exist without either virtue or vice, as in infants. The character requires the nature, but does not issue until the person inheriting the nature has morally acted, and is the result, or rather the substance, thereof. Nature is what the being is in his tendencies and powers. Character is what the being is in relation to law touching his duty. Duty cannot be predicated of nature, but only of a person as

to the right use of his nature; and character is as the right or wrong use.

It is said that the suffering of death and all other forms of suffering which came to Adam on account of his sin were tokens of the divine wrath and judicial visitations for the maintenance of law—punishments. Death is explicitly stated, in the law itself, to be the penalty of sin. It is repeated in many forms throughout revelation: "Because thou hast hearkened," etc. "The wages of sin is death." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."

There is not perfect agreement as to the exact import of the word death. It is used in a triple sense in the Scriptures, undoubtedly. In one case it signifies the dissolution of the body and its concomitants; in another it signifies the state of a soul in which sin reigns; in a third it signifies permanent severance from communion with God and endurance of his displeasure. These are, all and severally, death. Are they all included in the penalty of sin? It is so generally understood by evangelical theologians.

We think there can be no doubt of the fact that they are, all and severally, the effects of sin—facts that never would have existed but for sin—but whether the several forms constitute the penalty of sin may possibly be questioned. Whether the presence of the first form is declarative of the sin of the subject, and whether the second form is an effect of penalty or is simply the state of the subject, may be doubted.

Much in the answer must depend upon the exact meaning we attach to the word punishment. If we mean suffering directly inflicted on the sinner for his sin and for the maintenance of law—and that seems to be its meaning—in that case the sinner's suffering only, and that part which is judicially inflicted, is punishment. Yet, further, it enters into the idea of punishment that the reason of the suffering is in the fact

of the sin; and as punishment it is a suffering which is confined to the sinner, in whom the sin exists, as its sole reason.

But suppose the punishment inflicted on the sinner for his sin be such as to carry over suffering to others who did not sin, the question arises, Are these sufferings penal?—that is, Are they judicially inflicted on the sinner for the maintenance of law? A commits a murder. The law, for its support, affixes death to that crime—the death of the murderer. This is the penalty of the law; that is punishment. Now, when A is executed, a consequence is that his children suffer in many forms. Are these sufferings penal? Are they judicially inflicted for the maintenance of law; are they for the sin of the sufferer? If any should so say would we not conclude that his moral perceptions are dull and his understanding of language defective?

It would seem from these reflections that punishment justly inflicted declares the sin of the subject in all cases, but it would also seem that punishment inflicted on a sinning person to declare his guilt, and to support the law which he has dishonored, may, in many ways, give rise to other forms of suffering, reaching out to other and perfectly innocent beings; which sufferings may be even greater than the real and great penal suffering endured by the guilty himself—may be greater in a hundred different sufferers than that inflicted on the guilty—and in no proper sense any part of the legal penalty, but only accidents of its infliction; the essential difference being, not in the amount of the suffering, but in the subjects and sources. In the one case the subject is guilty; in the other case he is innocent. In the former case law inflicts suffering for its support; in the latter the consequences of guilt affect the innocent, but not as penalty.

Mr. Wesley and Mr. Watson held to imputation in a certain sense, but by no means in the Calvinistic sense. They held to

punishment and guilt on account of Adam's sin, but not at all in the Calvinistic sense.

These points are clearly set forth, especially in Mr. Watson: That Adam's sin was personal in such sense that he alone became subject to its proper penalty of eternal death. But they hold that it was imputed in a sense to the unborn potentialities in him, in such a way that the punishment of death reached them as the extinction of their seminal existence.

They hold that being born with depravity is in a sort sin, but not sin that is punishable with eternal death; and yet that it is punishable. They distinguish between punishments proper and penal consequences; as, when a murderer is hanged for his crime he is punished, but his children who suffer the consequent disgrace may be said to be punished. The punishment in the first case being on account of guilt as its desert; in the second case being simply suffering consequent upon a relation of some kind to the sufferer.

"Nowhere is it said, or even hinted in the most distant manner, that men will be sentenced to eternal death at that day, either because of Adam's sin or because their connection with Adam made them inevitably corrupt in nature and unholy in conduct; from which effects they could not escape, because God from eternity had resolved to deny them the grace necessary to this end." *

"What the race would have been had not the redeeming plan been brought in the Scriptures nowhere tell us, except that a sentence of death, to be executed '*in the day*' in which the first pair sinned, was the sanction of the law under which they were placed; and it is great presumption to assume it as a truth that they would have multiplied their species only for eternal destruction. That the race would have been propagated under an absolute necessity of sinning, and of being

* *Theological Institutes*, part ii, pp. 397, 398.

made eternally miserable, we may boldly affirm to be impossible; because it supposes an administration contradicted by every attribute which the Scriptures ascribe to God."*

Thus he explicitly denies the possibility of such a participation in Adam's sin by his posterity as to expose to the penalty of eternal death. Mr. Wesley holds the same view, and asserts, as Mr. Watson does, as a maxim: "The Judge of the whole earth will do right;" "He will judge the world in righteousness," and every man therein according to the strictest justice. He will punish no man for doing anything which he could not possibly avoid, neither for omitting anything which he could not possibly do. Every punishment supposes the offender might have avoided the offense for which he is punished. Otherwise to punish him would be palpably unjust and inconsistent with the character of God, our Governor.

"Taking these principles, let them be applied to the case before us. The scheme of predestination in question contemplates the human race as fallen in Adam. It must, therefore, contemplate them either as seminally in Adam, not being yet born, or as to be actually born into the world.

"In the former case the only actual beings to be charged with sin, 'the transgression of the law,' were Adam and Eve; for the rest of the human race not being actually existent were not capable of transgressing, or if they were, in a vague sense, capable of it by virtue of the federal character of Adam, yet then only as *potential*, and not as *actual*, beings; beings, as the logicians say, *in posse*, not *in esse*. Our first parents rendered themselves liable to eternal death. This is granted; and had they died 'in the day' they sinned, which but for the introduction of a system of mercy and long-suffering, and the appointment of a new kind of probation, for anything that appears, they must have done, the human race would have

* P. 398.

perished with them, and the only conscious sinners would have been the only conscious sufferers. But then this lays no foundation for election and reprobation—the whole race would thus have perished without the vouchsafement of mercy to any.

“This predestination must therefore respect the human race fallen in Adam, as to be born actually, and to have a real, as well as a potential, existence; and the doctrine will be that the race so contemplated were made unconditionally liable to eternal death. In this case the decree takes effect immediately upon the fall, and determines the condition of every individual in respect to his being elected from this common misery, or his being left in it; and it rests its plea of *justice* upon the assumed fact that every man is absolutely liable to eternal death wholly and entirely for the sin of Adam, a sin to which he was not a consenting party, because he was not in actual existence. But if eternal death be ‘*the wages of sin*,’ and the sin which receives such wages be the transgression of a law by a voluntary agent (and this is the rule as laid down by God himself), then on no scriptural principle is the human race to be considered absolutely liable to personal and conscious eternal death for the sin of Adam, and so the very ground assumed by the advocates of this theory is unfounded.” *

The principle bodied in all these quotations, as maxims of divine jurisprudence to which the divine administration must conform, is that a sin must be personal, and hence that Adam’s sin cannot be imputed to his posterity as ground of punishment and guilt. The same is positively affirmed in a passage on page 342. It occurs in his discussion of election, in commenting on the case of the nonelect. He says: “In whatever light the subject be viewed, no fault, in any right construction, can be chargeable on the persons so punished, or, as we may rather say, destroyed, since punishment supposes a judicial pro-

* P. 395.

ceeding which this act shuts out. For either the reprobates are destroyed for a pure reason of sovereignty, without any reference to their sinfulness, and thus all criminality is left out of the consideration, or they are destroyed for the sin of Adam, to which they were not consenting; or for personal faults resulting from a corruption of nature which they brought into the world with them, and which God wills not to correct, and they have no power to correct themselves. *Every received notion of justice is thus violated.*"

It is not pretended that in no case can the sin of one occasion suffering to another or others. Such may be the relations of parties, either natural or social, that neither can suffer without the other participating. The suffering resulting from punishment inflicted on one for crime may inevitably reach others, even more acutely than the criminal himself. The evil consequences in some cases may be more serious and lasting than the punishment. But in no proper sense of the word can they be accounted punishment, or a part of the punishment. The incidental evils are accidents of relation. Punishments are judicial pains which connect themselves with the crime in the person of the criminal. He is the only person known to the law, and the only person, therefore, that can be subject of judicial treatment. When it is said, "By the sin of one man condemnation passed upon all," it is not meant that the all were accounted guilty and adjudged to punishment, which would, as we have seen, be a violation of justice, but rather it is meant that as a consequence of their relation they became affected with evil, which would inevitably work to their ruin; and because this would be unjust it is immediately added, "so by the righteousness of one the free gift passed upon all unto justification of life"—the evils that ensued from the natural relation of innocent seed to their natural head were counterworked by their relation to their gracious Head. If the passage is to be regarded as declaring a

judicial act at all it was not, on the one part, the act of condemnation to punishment and on the other side the act of a judicial pardon, for there was no possible guilt in the case; which fact rendered such judicial acts impossible. The declaration is of beings potential, and is equivalent to the statement that the condemnation of Adam—which in effect was the condemnation of his unborn descendants to that forfeiture of life which would result from his death—was reversed by redemption, by which they were permitted to live, and without imputation of blame for the fallen nature which they inherited.

Calvinistic writers have a way of defining punishment which is false and misleading, and which is made to serve a sophistical purpose. There is but one true idea of punishment. The word is perfectly definite. All just use of the word must recognize this exclusive and exhaustive meaning. It signifies penalty, that suffering which law attaches to its violation, and which is due and is adjudged to the transgressor and none other.

The essential and only possible ground of liability is that the person so liable be a transgressor, in the meaning of the law. It can never arise without this, and never go beyond it. These are its absolute and only conditions. The sufferings which are accidents of the law's infliction are not a part of it, are not known to it. When it is said, therefore, that punishment is any suffering to which a person is liable because of sin the definition is made to serve a misleading idea. If it meant any suffering to which a *person* is *judicially* liable for *his* sin it would be true. But it is used in a much broader sense, and a meaning is adroitly incorporated which hides a dangerous fallacy. The word liable is the equivocal factor. In law it means amenable, or subject to, because of the relation of the party to law. It is employed, however, in the loose sense of what we are exposed to, or subjects of, without respect to our relations

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to law; and so all the evils to which we are exposed, which result from violation of law by another, is called punishment. Adam sinned, and he was adjudged to death. This was punishment to which he was liable for his sin. We as his descendants are subject to death, because we inherit his fallen fortunes. Since this liability, in the sense of "subjection to," comes to us by our relation to him, it is declared that we incur the penalty even as he did, since it results from a judicial process. This is clearly not true. Our death results to us as an accident of his sin and our relation to him, and is not something to which we are adjudged as violators of law. The only party known to the law and punished by it is the transgressor. Others inherit calamities through his sin, but they are not punishments, as the law does not know them.

But am I asked, How, then, do I account for the death of infants, as punishment? I answer, I deny that to them it is punishment. But it is said that I have already admitted it to be punishment, and how, then, can I now repudiate the admission?

The question is perfectly fair, and I am in duty bound to furnish an answer.

My position is this: Adam, the first man, was placed under specific law to God, inclusive of all moral duty; he was also placed under a positive law, which was a test law. This positive law read, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now, either that declaration was a mere prophecy or it was the assertion of a penalty. I take the latter view. It was penalty. But of which law? The law concerning the tree. It is specific—its terms are express. Do you wish to widen it? Upon what authority? Do you answer, Upon the authority of other interpretative passages? What passages? "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "Wherefore, as by one

man sin entered into the world, and . . . death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: for until the law," etc. These are certainly the crucial passages. We propose to examine each and find its exact meaning. They are introduced to prove that the temporal death of each human being is the punishment of his sin. This we deny.

Before the examination it is proper we should state our view, that the interpretation may be in the light of the two theories.

We hold that Adam's sin against his law involved him in the threatened penalty, which certainly included temporal death. It is therefore true that death was by sin—*temporal death* by sin, as to the tree. That transaction terminated the first covenant. It was the end of the economy. The law given to the innocent Adam, whose violation was death, was broken, and under that economy nothing more remained but the execution of the penalty. Observe, the terms are few and simple and express: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it"—that is the command part and the whole of it; "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." No more can be put into it. The disobedience having transpired, the subject must die, and the covenant has reached its end. The transaction fully accounts for the introduction of sin and the introduction of death. But it accounts for nothing beyond Adam. The fact of Adam's posterity, and of their circumstances, does not enter into that transaction at all except as rendered impossible by it. The completion of that covenant in the execution of penalty on the transgressor was the extinction of the race.

Now, to account for the existence of the race, and any and all the circumstances connected therewith, we shall come to another covenant, or economy, or arrangement, or new departure, and all subsequent events must be explained under the provisions of the

new. The old is abolished—has no more force; is nothing; explains nothing. Parts of it may be carried over and incorporated in the new, but the new must interpret everything. Nothing remains by virtue of the former covenant, however it may resemble it. It is analogous to a contract or form of government which is superseded by a later, which may or may not continue parts of the old, but which alone, in its new constitution, interprets and is responsible for what exists under it.

The new covenant had respect to an Adam already under sentence of death. Now the question is: What did it propose to do? What did it do? What has arisen under it? What will arise under it? As the old covenant vanished away everything must be explained under the new.

As I understand it, the new departure was a covenant or arrangement by which the death impending over the guilty Adam was not removed, but suspended. The new economy did not abolish it, but carried it up, so that the penalty of the first covenant was incorporated into the second—as to the Adam as *penalty*, as to his seed as *inheritance*. The new covenant provided that the death-doomed Adam should be permitted to beget children in his likeness, and that they should come into the inheritance of his mortality as well as the inheritance of his nature—his disordered affections. Thus the death which was to him *penalty* of the law he had broken—and which declared his sin, and which became possible to him because he sinned—to his children *became an inheritance*; not a punishment, not at all declarative of their sin. It was born of penalty—just as shame to the children of a murderer is born of his crime but is not penalty. Their death comes not of the law sentence as to themselves, but as an inheritance from a fallen, but redeemed, ancestor, under a new and totally different economy from that under which his death was incurred.

The children born to Adam thus die not because they are

sinners, for they die often before they are sinners. The new covenant, as the old, has its law and its penalty, but neither the law nor the penalty reads as the old. What is the law of the new covenant? I answer, The law embraces the whole moral law of God as in the former case. It imposes all moral duty, all righteousness of motive, of affection, of action; perfect love to God, and perfect love to man; unswerving obedience.

Is the subject, fallen and abnormal, able to keep this law in all its requirements from its birth?

We answer: It is not a law to infants, but to adults. Infants are not suitable subjects of command; can neither know a law, nor obey a law, nor be judged by a law. But can adults, from the moment they become responsible, keep a perfect law? We answer: We cannot tell what, under grace, a human being might do; but we hold that no moral law can be binding which is absolutely beyond the power of the subject, unless his inability has been guiltily superinduced. We deny that it is possible to predicate *oughtness* of an absolute impossibility. Hence, once more, we hold that the new covenant is not a mere legal covenant, having commands and a penalty. It is a covenant of mercy, in which provision is made for failure; in which faith is imputed for righteousness, or whose penalty may be averted.

What are its penalties? To this I answer: It does not reenact or carry up the penalty of the old, as penalty. That is, the subjects of the new are not already under sentence from the old. They do not begin with penalty incurred. It is *not natural death*, therefore natural death is no part of it: natural death will exist though its penalty should be averted. Natural death is in the covenant itself, not in its breach. Its penalty is banishment from God; just that, and no more, and no less. When do we become liable? When we sin, and do not repent. When will it be executed?

The point we make, and hold to be of great importance, is that the Adamic law, expressed in the command concerning the tree, and the penalty attached thereto, are not the law and penalty holding over his degenerate descendants. They take their existence under a new law—one wholly moral—and their liability to penalty arises upon wholly different ground facts.

We do not deny that, as to general contents, the law in the two cases is identical; but there is a specific difference, arising out of the difference in the circumstances and nature of the subject. Ideal moral law can never prescribe less than perfection to its subject. It is the standard. In this respect all moral beings are under the same law. But law can never oblige its subject beyond his power. Therefore ideal law of perfection can only bind him when there is power of obedience. Doubtless upon Adam the whole moral law laid its imperative, but of this no mention is made. How far he would have been able to realize the ideal we have no means of knowing. It is revealed to us that he was obliged, under penal sanctions, but the penalty was attached to a specific clause and a positive, and not to the law demanding ideal perfection. This clause we know he had the power to keep, and hence perceive the righteousness of the sentence. No man knows anything further. The race is under the ideal law: moral perfection is the standard of requirement; it can be nothing else; but what is the penalty of failure, and when does the penalty become due?

To these questions I answer: First, while ideal perfection is the standard of claim the divine law never imposes this as duty on fallen beings, and never threatens penalty upon its failure. It is confessedly a law addressed to fallen beings—beings crippled in their nature. It requires obedience to the extent of their ability, whatever that may be. It threatens penalty on disobedience, but since disobedience may result from inability, or other palliating cause, or even from criminal intent, it offers

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pardon, and executes its penalty on the sinner not until after his refusal to repent. It is a law whose penalty is laid rather against persistent impenitence than breaches of its requirements; whose claim is met rather by repentance and faith, with evangelical efforts to obey, than by perfect obedience. The penalty of any just law is a suffering inflicted by justice for a fault which was avoidable. The penalty, therefore, was avoidable. That was so under the first law. It is so under the second. Natural death is not avoidable. With what propriety can it be a penalty? The finally saved are saved from what? Sin and its penalty. But they die. Then death is not penalty. The death which is the penalty of the new covenant is not natural death, but soul death—the loss of the soul. All the warnings are against that death. All the promises are of deliverance from that death.

Pardon annuls punishment. The pardoned are not punished. The terms are exclusive of each other. Believers are pardoned, but they die. Then death is not punishment—the death which they die. In a word, nothing is plainer than that evils which result to the race in consequence of Adam's sin are not, in any proper sense of the word, punishments, but incidents of a redeemed life during the period of its probation, reaching it in part by inheritance, or coming to it for correction and reproof—admonitive of future wrath. The evils inherited are permitted to reach the innocent by reason of their relation to a guilty ancestor, under an economy of salvation. The evils which reach them for their own sins may be of the nature of penalty, but even these are chiefly admonitory. Punishment properly comes after trial, and ends the case.

The theory, then, which undertakes to explain our guilt for Adam's sin on the hypothesis of our coexistence in and coaction with him fails—fails because its postulate is shown to be false. Dr. Hodge agrees with us in sweeping it away as a figment of

imagination; as an impossible conception. The supposition of the guilt of the race in Adam has no support in it. Dr. Shedd declares it can have no other foundation. Between Union and Princeton the truth of the doctrine is shown to be impossible. We are constrained to agree with this conclusion. Dr. Shedd affirms, what all rational men admit to be true, that sin and guilt can only be predicated of will—and of will in action, or as primitive originating cause; that it can only be predicated of individuals because of the relation of their wills to its production. Unquestionably he is right. Dr. Hodge declares that we could not have personal connection with Adam's sin by coaction, since we did not exist at the time. Unquestionably he is right. The conclusion is inevitable: since we had no connection with the act it cannot be ground of our guilt or sin.

I have not deemed it pertinent to expose other dangerous errors in Dr. Shedd's able discussion; but cannot dismiss his theory without adding that its ability is only surpassed by its dangerous sophistries, and its want of candor in presenting the doctrine it antagonizes is only equaled by the unsoundness and manifold errors into which it has brought its learned and adroit expounder.

The real theory, which we shall examine, we designate the Princeton theory. We do not mean that it is peculiar to Princeton, but that it finds its strong support in Dr. Hodge, the theologian of Princeton, as against New England theologians, on the one hand, and Danville on the other. He constantly asserts that his view is that which has been held by the orthodox Church from Augustine down. We have seen already how stoutly he denies and resists the theory advanced by Dr. Shedd—the theory that the race is guilty of original sin because of community of nature, or any kind of actual participation in the Adam's sin. He rejects it on two grounds: first,

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that it is in direct conflict with the doctrine as held by the Church from the beginning ; and, second, as impossible in fact, and as involving many dangerous and damaging consequences. His own view excludes it. Asserting more stoutly, if possible, the doctrine of the sin and guilt of the race than they do, he has an entirely different explanation of it.

It is this: The race sinned and became guilty in the Adam, representatively, or imputatively; that is, the Adam was the divinely constituted representative of the race. As such his act was imputed to them as their act—accounted theirs. It was not their act in any real sense, but it was made theirs by imputation. They had no real participation in it, but he who acted represented them and they became guilty as if they had acted themselves. According to the theory already examined the race had a real presence in Adam, and did really act with him, and so were really guilty of the sin as their own sin. The sin was theirs in fact, not by imputation. According to this theory the sin was not their own in the fact, but by imputation. The theory is called the strict imputation theory. It is just to say that Dr. Hodge and those who agree with him do not rest the whole of the doctrine of original sin here. They admit that it consists in part in the corruption of nature which descends from the Adam to his posterity, and in this respect is real and personal. Original sin comprises these two parts: first, it is the guilt of Adam's representative act charged to his posterity; second, being thus found guilty of sin, by imputation, the posterity are punished by the withdrawment from them of that original righteousness in which they would have appeared, and in the stead thereof endued with the possession of a corrupt and sinful nature; and this nature is their real and positive sin.

That this is the theory will appear from the following extracts. Dr. Hodge thus defines it: "Adam, as the common

father of all men, was by divine appointment constituted not only the natural, but the federal, head or representative of his posterity. The race stood its probation in him. His sin was the sin of the race, because the sin of its divinely and righteously constituted representative." *

Again: "The main point in the analogy between Christ and Adam, as presented in the theology of the Protestant Church, and as exhibited by the apostles, is that as in the case of Christ, his righteousness, as something neither done by us nor wrought in us, is the judicial ground of our justification, with which inward holiness is connected as an invariable consequence, so in the case of Adam, his offense, something outside of ourselves, a *peccatum alienum*, is the judicial ground of the condemnation of our race, of which condemnation spiritual death or inward corruption is the expression and the consequence." †

Again: "He has insisted that it was not our works or our subjective character, but the blood of Christ, his propitiatory death, his righteousness, the righteousness of God, something therefore out of ourselves, which is the judicial ground of our justification. It is to illustrate the great fundamental doctrines of the Gospel that he refers to the parallel case of Adam, and shows that antecedently to any act of our own, *before any corruption of nature*, the sentence of condemnation passed upon all men for the offense of one. To deny this, and to assert that our subjective character is the ground of the sentence, is not only to deny the very thing which the apostles asserts, but to overturn the whole argument." ‡

The elaborate articles in the *Princeton Essays* on Pelagianism, Original Sin, and Imputation, as well as Dr. Hodge's reviews of Dr. Parks and Dr. Baird, in the years 1851-60, and

* *Princeton Review*, April, 1860, p. 340.

† *Biblical Repertory*, 1860, p. 341.

‡ P. 344.
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Dr. Nathaniel Taylor's on the Divine Government, contain in many forms statements of precisely the import of the above extracts. We may cite a few more brief paragraphs.

Dr. Thornwell, in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*,* in his review of Dr. Baird's book, holds the same positions: "This is the point upon which we differ—not whether a man can be punished for what is not his own, but whether there is only one way of a thing being his own. If there is a just moral sense in which an action can be mine, without my having actually committed it, then there is a ground upon which it may be righteously imputed to me without my being the cause of it. . . . We contend that representation as really establishes the relation of property in action as personal causation; that what a man does by his agent he as truly does as if he did it in his own proper person. The maxim expresses the common sense of mankind, *qui facit per alium facit per se*. The whole system of sponsorship in society is founded upon it, and no commonwealth could hang together for a single generation if the principle were discarded. This is the principle upon which the imputation of Adam's first sin, to us, proceeds. He was our representative; he was our head, our agent; on probation, not for himself alone, but for all who should descend from him by ordinary generation. There can be no question but, if he sustained this relation to us, we are implicated in all that he did in this relation. His acts are ours, and we are as responsible for them as if we had committed them ourselves. We sinned in him, and fell with him in the first transgression."

Dr. Thornwell declares that "there is no reason to suppose that, independently of the sovereign appointment of God, the character and conduct of Adam would have had any legal effects upon the destiny of his offspring." †

* For 1861, pp. 188, 189.

† P. 193.

Pages 200 and 201 of the same article reiterate and expand the same positions. Farther along he holds this remarkable language: "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners. Either we are guilty of that act or original corruption is in us simply misfortune. In some way or other it is ours, justly imputable to us, or we are not, and cannot be, born the children of wrath. But we are guilty; conscience testifies that we are guilty—that our native corruption is in us [change of ground]. But as we did not sin personally, as we did not sin naturally, we must have sinned vicariously. The only alternative is—in ourselves, or in another. Ourselves are out of the question. Therefore we sinned in Adam, and our history truly began before our birth. Our appearance in time was not an absolute commencement, but moral relations preceded and determined it. In bringing us into the world sinners God did nothing more than execute the decree of his justice; the negative agency of withholding or not imparting the divine image is sufficient to explain the effect. To be destitute of the image of God is to be in an unholy state, and the want of original righteousness necessitates positive corruption. But still the agency of God, in the production of that corruption, is purely punitive and judicial. The case is this: The being to be produced is, under the curse, exposed to the penalty of the law. . . . This is precisely the doctrine of our standards. There is first guilt; then the want of original righteousness; and then corruption of the whole nature." *

Nothing could be more explicit than these statements, and we could add to them indefinitely from ancient and recent expounders of the doctrine of original sin. They directly contradict the explanation we have already examined, and thus divide the defenders of the doctrine into clans mutually destroying one another, each party declaring that what the other

* Pp. 206-208.

holds cannot be true. And they are unquestionably severally right!

To the view before us we have these objections to offer: The theory is that we are guilty of Adam's first sin because he acted as our agent or representative; and it admits that we did not have any personal connection of any kind with the act; is even careful to state, and insist upon it, that we had no existence at the time it occurred.

The words imputation and representation are so important, in this theory, that we do well to ponder them before we proceed with our exceptions.

By representation, representative, federal head, and kindred terms, whatever other meanings may be attached to them by other minds, as used by Dr. Hodge and the school of which, because of his eminence, I have chosen him as an exponent, is meant that Adam was appointed to act for us; so that his act should be ours as really as if we acted ourselves, and we should be responsible in the same degree as if we had acted personally. He became our representative by appointment and sovereign constitution.

By imputation is meant the actual ascribing to us the act, and the whole of its moral contents, which he did under this constitution, so that we became morally related to it just as we would have been if we had lived and been the actors ourselves, just as the real actor himself was.

"That which is adopted by Protestants generally, as well Lutheran as Reformed, and also by the great body of the Latin Church, is that in virtue of the union, natural and federal, between Adam and his posterity, his sin, though not their act, is so imputed to them that it is the judicial ground of the penalty threatened against him coming also upon them. This is the doctrine of immediate imputation." *

* Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, p. 190.

Now, to this theory I have to answer: Given a God of justice and truth, the supposition, in both its parts, is necessarily false. It is impossible that there should have been *any such* representation, or any such imputation.

The word representation is confusing here, because used in an exceptional and impossible sense. There is a doctrine of representation that is admissible, but this is not that doctrine. When we object to this doctrine we do not object to the doctrine of representative responsibility, but only to a false and impossible form, or rather perversion, of it.

There is a true case in which one person may morally represent another; so that the whole moral contents of the acts of the representative may go over to the represented, just as if he had himself committed the act; it is *de facto* his act. That case is this: when the party represented agrees that the party representing shall be his agent; agrees to be bound and responsible in whatever he does; but even in such a case it may be doubted whether the moral contents of a specific act would reach the party represented without a specific commission to its performance.

There is a modified form of representation when one party is appointed to represent another—a minor or incompetent person. Thus parents are the natural representatives of their children; guardians, appointed by the State, the legal representatives of their wards. But in these cases the representation can only affect the external interest of the represented. That is, the represented party can only be bound, or made to suffer, in his estate, or his temporal circumstances, by his representative. No moral act of the agent can be imputed as guilt to the party represented. The parent or guardian may by neglect of duty, criminal misuse of his agency, or ignorance, or even with the best possible motives, injure, in various ways, and very seriously, the child or ward, in reputation, in property, in charac-

ter, in well-being ; but there is one thing he never can do : he can never make the represented morally responsible for any of his deeds ; his sin can never become the sin of the child or ward ; his power to represent or act as agent stops short of power to inculcate in deeds of guilt.

The doctrine of representation taught by Dr. Hodge and the theologians, ancient and modern, who concur with him is neither of these ; it is a form of representation which never did exist, and never can until intuitions of justice are expunged from the universe.

The case supposed by him is this, as we have seen in numerous excerpts from his own writings and the writings of eminent exponents of the theory : that one person was created, and placed on trial under law in such form that, if he should break the law, he would become deserving of the endless wrath and curse of his Maker ; and he was appointed at the same time to represent his unborn and nonexisting descendants, so that his guilty act should be laid to their charge as if they had performed it themselves, and they should become therefor subject to the same wrath and curse which he deserved and suffered even as they would be if they had personally committed the act.

This, it is assumed, is a conceivable and real case, and not at all inconsistent with justice and honor and truth. On the ground of representation he says the sin of the one is, and justly, the sin of the many—and therefore the curse is theirs : the sin is imputed and the punishment is inflicted. The imputed sin becomes real sin, thus : “To impute sin, in scriptural and theological language, is to impute the guilt of sin. And by guilt is meant, not criminality, or moral ill desert, or demerit, much less moral pollution, but the judicial obligation to satisfy justice. Hence the evil consequent on the imputation is not an arbitrary infliction ; not merely a misfortune or calamity, not a

chastisement, in the proper sense of that word, but a punishment; that is, an evil inflicted in the execution of the penalty of law and for the satisfaction of justice."* "The ground of the imputation of Adam's sin, or the reason why the penalty of his sin has come upon all his posterity, is the union between us and Adam. There could, of course, be no propriety in imputing the sin of one man unto another unless there were some connection between them to explain and justify such imputation. . . . The union between Adam and his posterity, which is the ground of the imputation of his sin to them, is both natural and federal."†

The theory of the elder Edwards has a general resemblance to this but really differs from it, and in this is the leading representative of a class. He holds to a real oneness of Adam's posterity with him, not on the ground that the posterity were substantially in him, but on this ground: they were divinely constituted one; the one Adam was all other men, not substantially, but really, because so in the divine mind; that therefore the sin and guilt of Adam were really and properly the sin and guilt of each of his descendants; they were morally, by a divine constitution, the same person. This seems to be the view of several of the leading New England divines, and, as they contend, was possibly the opinion of Augustine himself, and many eminent divines of intermediate ages.

The point in which this differs from the Princeton school, if we can understand them, is this: Edwards holds to the actual sin and guilt of the posterity for Adam's sin as one moral person with him by divine constitution—which Hodge denies, but holds that, while the posterity are not one moral person with the Adam, they are by a divine constitution regarded and treated as if they were one. They did not really sin in Adam, but are regarded as having done so. The difference holds to be fundamental. It is, perhaps, however, imaginary. The

* Vol. ii, p. 194.

† P. 196.

objections to both are identical, and will be mainly offered in connection with the Princeton theory. Still, before passing, let us briefly examine this opinion.

The object is to explain how we are guilty of Adam's sin. To do this it alleges that his sin was *de facto* our sin, inasmuch as we were morally one person. This ground of condemnation is identical to both. Allowing the premises, it must be admitted that the explanation is complete. If we were one with Adam we sinned precisely as he did, and are justly held.

But how is our oneness made out? Edwards admits that our substance did not exist in Adam, nor, until six thousand years afterward, did our persons.

But how, then, were we one? He answers that we were one by divine constitution; that is, that we were constituted one. But what does this mean? It can mean nothing other than that God determined to regard us as one when, in fact, we were not one. To say that we became one when I was not in existence is to assume that I existed when it is admitted I did not exist. To say that we were one in the divine thought when we were not one in fact is nothing other than to say that the divine idea was contrary to the fact; that God assumed that to be which was not! The only other meaning possible is that the divine Being determined to treat us in the same way as if we were one; view the posterity as like the head and treat us in the same manner—one in kind; unless it is contended that because he determined to regard us as one we really did become so. It was either a legal oneness or an actual oneness. The latter it could not be, unless it can be shown that to be and not to be are convertible terms.

Could it be the former? That is, were we constituted one legally, so that what Adam did in the eye of the law I did? The difficulties here are no less numerous than in the former case. God determined to view Adam's act as my act when it

was not my act; when it could not be my act unless it can be shown that I could act before I existed. It is nothing other than to charge God with assuming that to be true which he knew to be false—to regard me as one with Adam when I was not one with Adam.

But it supposes that my sin, which is held to be real, is not something which originates with me; that is, it is not my sin. It makes me a sinner, not because I have sinned, but because another man sinned and by a divine fiction it is transferred to me! I am not a sinner in fact, but I am so in the divine idea. I am held to punishment for a fiction in the divine mind—or on no other ground than that God alleges against me what could not be true, namely, that I sinned before I existed.

This theory is introduced, like the one we have already examined, to show how it is that Adam's posterity are guilty of his sin. The grand difficulty in the way of the doctrine, and which it seeks to remove, is that it antagonizes justice. The object is to relieve that difficulty; to show that it does not implicate justice and possible truth; to show that it is not necessarily contradictory and false. The method has the merit of being simple—plain. It is relieved of all physiological entanglements and mystical realistic notions, and announces itself in a plain and perfectly intelligible proposition: We are guilty of Adam's sin solely on the ground that God constituted him by appointment our representative; determining to regard as our act whatever he did and to treat us accordingly. In harmony with this divine arrangement when Adam sinned God regarded us as sinning also, and views and treats us as guilty! Our personal depravity is not a natural consequence of our relation to Adam, but a penal infliction upon us regarded as sinners.

Can this doctrine be true? Does it harmonize the apparently

conflicting doctrines of our hereditary guilt and the infinite justice of God? We have seen in former discussions what sin and guilt are. Can they be accounted for in this way?

To our conception this theory is beset with precisely the same embarrassments which those who embrace it allege against the realistic theory, and many more.

Stripped of all disguises, if we can comprehend the import of language, it is simply that we, who were not in the fact guilty of Adam's sin, are made so by the divine purpose so to regard us. But this is an impossibility on two grounds: First, it is impossible that God should regard us as guilty when we are not, unless it can be shown that God can hold that to be true which is not true. Second, if it were possible that he should thus confound truth and falsehood it could not make the falsehood true. He might, if he were capable of regarding a falsehood as a truth, which is assumed, call us guilty when we are not—and he might, if void of justice, determine to treat us as guilty on the monstrous fiction—but this could never change the facts in the case. They would remain as they were before. We should still be guiltless, though charged with guilt; innocent, though punished. Facts are facts, and do not change their nature however they are viewed by any mind. If the principle should be allowed that one person can be constituted guilty because another is, simply by an arbitrary constitution, then one might be constituted guilty when no one was so. Why not? If I may be constituted guilty when I am not really so, simply because God determines to consider me so, then so might Gabriel, or any angel—or all angels. The same principle would render allowable that every being in the universe should be considered and treated as guilty, and heaven be turned into hell. When Adam sinned either I did sin or I did not. If I did sin, then I was there and acted; or else I sinned when I had no being and did not act; but if I did not sin, and God

assumes that I did sin, he assumes what is not true! And if his assuming that I sinned, when I did not, makes it a fact that I did sin, then that is made to be a fact which is not a fact!—my sin is resolved to be no fact, but a fiction in the divine mind!

It is a fact, admitted and contended for by this author, that we who now live did not exist until six thousand years after Adam's sin; and yet it is contended that we are guilty of that very sin as really as he is. We ask, How? He answers, By the purpose of God that we should be so. Then it is a determination of God, an act in the divine mind, by which we are constituted sinners; not any act of our own. For six thousand years after the act for which we were thus made sinners we were not sinners, for we were not at all; a certain guilt, then—that is, our guilt—must have been borne along through all this period, without anybody being guilty, which seized upon us as soon as we came into being! So far as we are concerned it is a created guilt: God alone is its immediate and sole author.

It is no answer to this to reply that a party may be guilty for what his representative does; that is true when the representative really represents the party; but here there was no representation, for there was no party to be represented, and the representative represented no will but his own; it is not even pretended that he did, for it is conceded there was no other will. If my will concur with another in act it is morally my act as much as his; but if he represent not my will it is no more my act than it is that of God himself. The principle that would allow that Adam should be my representative, so that I should be held by his act without my having any concurrence of will in the case, would allow that Satan himself should be my representative. If it could be made just, simply by appointment, in the one case it could on the same ground in the other. God could just as well seize upon any other sinner that

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ever lived and make my soul answerable for his crimes! Why not? But is not this shocking to think of? This whole idea of transferrable sin and guilt by mere arbitrary will, or constitution, is inadmissible in every form in which it can be stated. In ordinary cases, in which it stands naked before the mind—divested of the haze which is thrown around all theological questions—common sense at once and inexorably rejects it. A murder is committed of the most vile and atrocious kind. A hundred years afterward a child is born, a lineal descendant of the murderer, it may be. Could that child be held guilty of the murder? Suppose God should determine so to regard and treat him, would it make him so?—or does the mind shrink from the supposition with horror? But in what one particular does this case differ from the case before us? Adam commits a heinous sin. Six thousand years afterward a child is born, and God lays the sin upon him for no other reason than that he determines so to regard him! Truly this would be converting the government of God into a system of cruelty which might well cover the universe with terror and endless dismay.

It is said that, should God so determine, it would become just, since his will is the standard of right. We answer, No; justice is not something which is subject to caprice, but is eternal and immutable. The terms are incompatible, that a God of infinite truth should assume that to be true which is not true, namely, that there is guilt where there is no guilt; or that a God of infinite justice should, upon a fiction, treat as guilty a party who is not guilty.

This author denies the possibility of guilt because of hereditary depravity; that is, that our guilt arises from the fact that we are corrupt by nature. This, he says, is not to be admitted, because it would make us guilty without having had a probation, which would be a great injustice. Speaking of the

theory of Placæus, he says: "The meaning of Placæus was not that Adam's sin is imputed to us, but that on account of the inherent corruption derived from him we are regarded as being as deserving of death as he was. Imputation, therefore, is not the judicial ground of corruption, but corruption is the ground of guilt." This is the ground of Placæus: that we are accounted guilty because corrupt. To this Dr. Hodge objects "that it denies any probation to the race. They come into the world under the burden of spiritual death, infected with a deadly spiritual malady by a sovereign, arbitrary infliction. To put a man to death on account of a righteous judicial sentence is one thing. To put him to death without any offense or sentence is another thing. According to Placæus, men being born in sin, and having no probation in Adam, are condemned without trial or offense." *

This theory involves such consequences that it cannot be admitted. What consequences? Why, that the individuals are condemned to death without a fair trial or probation. This cannot be admitted. God could never proceed in this way. Before he condemns he must give a fair and equitable probation.

Certainly he is right in this. There is no maxim plainer than what is here assumed: that a fair and equitable probation must precede guilt; that is, before a party is treated as guilty he must have furnished the proof that he is guilty. But how does our author apply his principle? Why, thus: Adam was put upon probation, and it was determined that we should have our probation in him. He sinned; therefore we have had a fair trial, and, having sinned, deserve condemnation and are condemned. This statement fails entirely to relieve my difficulties. I am too obtuse to discover wherein it would be more unjust to condemn me for inborn depravity, without having had

* *Princeton Review*, 1860, p. 343.

a probation, than to condemn me for a trial which occurred six thousand years before I was born! I am too dull to perceive how I could undergo a fair probation so long before I had an existence. I cannot discover how Adam's probation was my probation, since I cannot but believe that we are two persons. It gives no help to tell me that we are viewed as one, since I know we are not one. So long as it appears to my mind a dictate of common sense that a person cannot in fact have a probation before he has existence it must be impossible for me to conceive how I had a probation in the garden of Eden. It is a direct contradiction. This whole idea of a probation in Adam is fallacious and deceptive. It resolves itself into this: that Adam was put upon trial and sinned; God determined to treat me as though I had also been put upon trial and had sinned, when in fact I was as pure a nonentity as possible—and this is a fair and equitable probation! Receive this who can!

If there is a single doctrine clearly and explicitly stated in the word of God, and, we may add, in the intuitive reason, it is that each man stands as a distinct and separate personality in the eye of divine law, and is treated for what he is and does himself, and for that alone. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." That proverb shall be done away.

There is, and there can be, no guilt without sin. Were there no sin in the universe there would be no guilt; and there can be no punishment without guilt. Were there no guilt in the universe there would be no punishment. And as there can be no guilt where there is no sin there can be no guilt in a person who has not sinned, any more than there could be guilt in a universe where there is no sin. Each person is as much alone and isolated as if there were no other being in existence and never could be; and so he must eternally be viewed by

the divine mind. Personality is a thing which admits of no partnership—no transfer. And so one cannot morally act for another—obey or disobey for him.

The testimony of God is most explicit upon this point: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

If the sin of Adam be my sin how did it become mine? The answer is: By a purpose of God that it should so be, and in no other way; it is ascribed to mere sovereignty. Then was there ever a time when I had power to prevent my sin? It is admitted that there was not. Then my sin, as my sin, is of necessity. By what necessity? By the necessity of God's appointment. That is, as my sin it has no cause but God—he is its Author. Is he displeased with me on account of it? Then he is displeased with me for being what I never had the power to avoid being, and for being what he alone caused me to be by his own sovereign appointment! Will he punish me for being thus? Then he will punish me for being what he determined I should be, and for being what I am only by means of his purpose that I should so be. That is, he will account me deserving to go to hell throughout eternity, not for anything I ever did, or could have prevented, not for anything I ever was in myself, but for no other reason than that he determined I should be so accounted and so punished! If ever there was a travesty of all ideas of justice to exceed this it has not fallen in the range of my observation. If words could be arranged to express the concept of utter malignity—mere power and unmixed cruelty—I confess to a total inability to

conceive the form of the sentences. Every instinct and intuition of humanity stands aghast at the dreadful intimation, and if it could be accepted revolt would be as universal as reason and conscience. It gives sin its habitat in God, and makes innocent and unoffending men its prey, and not its author.

To avoid the absurdity of imputing ill desert it deprives sin and guilt and punishment of their meaning; making sin, as we have seen, a something which can attach to a man without any action of his, and guilt to mean, not culpability, unworthiness—desert of blame, and so of punishment—but liability to be punished without respect to desert, and giving to punishment, not the idea of suffering inflicted in the interests of justice, but suffering inflicted against justice upon the unoffending. The persons charged with Adam's sin are not charged to have committed sin—not charged to be ill deserving on account of it—but are held to be punished, made to suffer, without having committed it and without any personal demerit! That is, to suffer eternal wrath because God chooses to inflict it upon them for the reason that Adam, whom they never knew, transgressed. The words sin, guilt, and punishment mean nothing, or mean precisely the opposite of their real meaning, in this theory.

But, conscious that this dreadful theory cannot stand, Dr. Hodge buttresses his position with another hypothesis still more revolting: we are guilty of original sin because we are depraved by it. He spends many pages to show that this mediate putation idea is unsound—un-Calvinistic; that it abandons the ground of strict imputationism; but finally attempts to steal it in unobserved and make it do service. He says the race were charged with the guilt of Adam's act—this is their real original sin; and thus being guilty they are punished with depravity; and thus being depraved they are made guilty on account of

their depravity. That is, being unborn they are charged with having sinned; God is displeased with them, and withdraws from them as a punishment; the effect of God's withdrawal is that they are depraved: they ought not to have been so born; their depravity is wrong and sin; and, since it is their depravity and sin, they deserve to be punished for it and are liable to eternal death.

What ingenuity of malignity is here! First, unborn souls are guilty of what another man did. Second, they are punished with personal depravity on account of that guilt for another man's sin. Third, they are punished in hell forever—first, for the sin of another before they were born, and then for already having been punished with depravity. Damned for a sin that was not theirs, and for having been unjustly punished with depravity!

The next method adopted is this: Denying the position that we were present with Adam, and so parties to his sin and guilt, and denying the theory that we are guilty by having his act charged against us as our own, which in fact it was not, it still asserts that we are by nature sinners, and guilty in Adam's sin, and deserving of death on that account—and for this reason: that his sin corrupted his whole nature and brought it into a state of disconformity to God's law, and that we—descending from him in the way of natural generation—have propagated in us the same corrupted nature, which is guilty and deserving of death. Thus it is that we are justly held.

The theory has two parts: First, that we are naturally depraved; second, that this is to us sin, ground of guilt and punishment. The first part has been already allowed and fully discussed; the second part is that which now comes under our notice.

Among those who hold this theory there are two methods of accounting for what is held to be our guilty depravity. First,

it is alleged that our depravity is a penal infliction for Adam's personal sin, both upon himself and his posterity, on this wise: Having sinned, God withdrew from him, as an indication of displeasure, and this withdrawal left his nature wholly averse to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil; and regarding his posterity as also guilty God likewise withdrew from them, and thus subjected them to the same utter ruin. And this depravity is held to be the sin of all who suffer it. The second view is that depravity is a natural effect of sin, which is propagated by natural generation—on the principle that like begets like—and yet that, inasmuch as it is disconformity to law, it is really sin, and chargeable as such against those in whom it is found without respect to the means by which it exists.

The former of these views is held by the Princeton divines, but they are very careful to state that the sin of inherited corruption is not only not to be considered the sole ground of our guilt, but secondary; the primary and immediate ground being that we are guilty for Adam's sin, and this is the penal effect of it.

To this we especially object: That it assumes our depravity to be a punishment—something that is inflicted upon us immediately by God, and that, as we have already seen, without any fault of our own, and upon an unrighteous legal fiction—and then it charges upon us that punishment as our sin! God originates our depravity, by punitively withdrawing from us, for no other cause than the false assumption that we deserve to be forsaken for what another man did thousands of years before we were born; and then holds us to be guilty because he has already inflicted upon us the greatest possible calamity, the withdrawal of his own presence; inevitably plunging us into all manner of evil. And this is the vindication of the divine justice! Two wrongs of inconceivable magnitude make an immaculate and infinite right! Punishment for another man's

sin, and then punishment for being punished, is the climax of justice! Surely this is strange doctrine. It is, indeed, nothing else but making God the author of sin, in the most objectionable manner; for if the depravity is punitively inflicted it matters nothing in what it consists, whether the influence of a physical substance or the privation of a moral element; and, if the depravity be sin, is not he who inflicts it its only and immediate author? If not, whence comes it? And will it be pretended that justice can allow that God, by a sovereign constitution or arbitrary action, can first inflict sin upon a creature of his own formation and then punish him for being as he makes him? Allow this, and then conceive, if it be possible, anything that would be injustice. If this might be, then what could not be? If this strikes not down the idea of justice entirely, I, for one, know not what could.

The other view is that depravity is naturally engendered; not a punishment but the result of a natural law; that, nevertheless, it is sin, and all to whom it comes are guilty and deserving of punishment on account of it. This view denies the charge of Adam's personal sin upon his posterity. That was his own. Our depravity is our own, and it is our sin. This is by far the nearest approach to a vindication of the natural guiltiness of man. It has the semblance of truth. But even this vanishes when analyzed and tested.

Admitted that we are depraved, that our depravity has its root in Adam's sin, that it is disconformity of our nature to God's law; does it therefore follow that it is sin-guilt? Our sin? Our guilt?

How came we by this depravity? It was caused. Who caused it? Did God, by punitive infliction, or Adam, by natural generation? It is admitted by all that we did not. We suffer it; it is inexorably thrust upon us; as much born with us as our bones and muscles—the color of our skin or the

fashion of our members. Is there blame? Where? Where does blame always attach? To effect or to cause? To him who suffers or to him who causes misery? We have already seen how impossible it is that God should hold one man guilty of another's sin; but is it more possible that he should charge guilt upon one man for the effect of another's sin?

It is, further, an insuperable objection to this theory that it makes sin and guilt physical; an objective something communicated in generation—a corruption of blood or taint of essence given either of God by immediate agency in the moment of generation, a created substance, or given by the natural father to what is begotten of him—or the absence of some property not given. In either case a physical fact. But upon what principle can a creature be held guilty either for what is given or for what is withheld in its generation? It may be defective, but it cannot be blameworthy for a defectiveness thus entailed. Is it possible to human reason to accept the proposition that an infant just born can by any possibility have at that moment a quality which would render it just in God to overwhelm it with his wrath to all eternity?

The theory misconceives of the only possible ground of sin and guilt as enunciated both in the intuitive reason and in revelation. All sin has its root in will and in the wrong actions of will. It can be predicated of nothing else. And this is really and constantly admitted by those who formally deny it. They insist that depravity is sin because it is the effect of sin, tending to other sin. That is, they trace it back to an act of will, without which they allow it could not exist, showing that they hold finally that the root of sin is in the will. But the root of sin is in the will which acts, and not in some other alien will. But who can pretend that such act of will has transpired in an infant just born? The argument on this point has been given in the examination of Professor Shedd's theory. Sin

and its effects are radically different ideas, and the one can never be put for the other. The effect may determine the magnitude of the sin but is not the sin itself. For the elaboration of this point refer to the discussion of the nature of sin. It is conceivable how depravity may be engendered, but sin never. Having its source in a person, a will, it cannot come to him *ab extra*. No mind ever did, or ever can, conceive of sin as a physical quality—a property of substance, whether material or immaterial. Men think they so conceive of it, but they do not. A closer scrutiny of their own ideas would show them that finally they mean by sin a quality of the action of will. It is something done. The person does it and *he* is guilty, but the sin is the something he does—a thing properly his own!

This putting of the doctrine is called the mediate imputation theory, and is thus stated by Dr. Hodge:

“About the middle of the seventeenth century Amyraut, Cappel, and La Place (or Placæus), three distinguished professors in the French Theological School at Saumur, introduced several modifications of the Augustinian or Reformed doctrine on the Decrees, Election, the Atonement, and the Imputation of Adam’s sin. La Place taught that we derive a corrupt nature from Adam, and that that corrupt nature, and not Adam’s sin, is the ground of the condemnation which has come upon all mankind. When it was objected to this statement of the case that it left out of view the guilt of Adam’s first sin, he answered that he did not deny the imputation of that sin, but simply made it dependent on our participation of his corrupted nature. We are inherently depraved, and therefore we are involved in the guilt of Adam’s sin. There is no direct or immediate imputation of Adam’s sin to his posterity, but only an indirect or mediate imputation of it, founded on the fact that we share his moral character. These views were first presented by La Place in a disputation, ‘*De statu hominis lapsi ante gratiam*,’

... and afterwards more elaborately in a treatise, '*De Imputatione primi peccati Adami.*' This doctrine was formally condemned by the National Synod of France in 1644-45 by the Swiss Churches in the 'Formula Consensus,' and by the theologians of Holland. . . .

"It was to evade the force of this decision that Placæus proposed the distinction between mediate and immediate imputation. He said he did not deny the imputation of Adam's sin, but only that it preceded the view of hereditary corruption. . . . Although the doctrine of mediate imputation was thus generally condemned, both by the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, it found some distinguished advocates beyond the pale of the French Church. The younger Vitranga, Venema, and Stapfer, in his *Polemical Theology*, gave it their sanction. From the last-named author it was adopted by President Edwards in one chapter of his work on *Original Sin*. It appears there, however, merely as an excrescence. It was not adopted into his system so as to qualify his theological views on other doctrines. Although President Edwards does clearly commit himself to the doctrine of Placæus, as he says, 'that the evil dispensation is first, and the charge of guilt *consequent*,' nevertheless he expressly teaches the doctrine of immediate imputation formally and at length in other portions of that work." *

It is not so much the history of the doctrine which concerns us as the doctrine itself. I think it would not be difficult to show that it had a much earlier origin; but it is with the doctrine itself we are more particularly interested. Dr. Hodge alleges against it several objections. These are interesting as showing the conflict among the defenders of the doctrine of original sin.

"1. It denies what the Scriptures assert. The Scriptures assert that the sentence of condemnation has passed upon all

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 205-207.

men for the sin of one man. This the doctrine of mediate imputation denies, and affirms that the ground of that condemnation is inherited depravity.

“2. This doctrine denies the penal character of hereditary corruption, in which all men are born. . . .

“3. It is a further objection to the doctrine of mediate imputation that it increases instead of relieving the difficulty of the case. It denies that a covenant was made with Adam. It denies that mankind ever had a probation. It assumes that, in view of a natural law of propagation, when Adam lost the image of God and became sinful his children inherit his character, and on the ground of that character are subject to the wrath and curse of God. All the evils, therefore, which the Scriptures and Church doctrine represent as coming upon the posterity of Adam as the judicial punishment of his first sin, the doctrine of mediate imputation represents as sovereign inflictions, or mere natural consequences. What the Scriptures declare to be a righteous judgment Placæus makes to be an arbitrary dispensation.

“4. It is a still more serious objection that this doctrine destroys the parallel between Adam and Christ on which the apostle lays so much stress in his Epistle to the Romans. . . .

“5. Perhaps, however, the most serious objection against the doctrine of mediate imputation is drawn from the principle on which it rests and the arguments of its advocates in its support. The great principle insisted upon in support of this doctrine is that one man cannot justly be punished for the sin of another.” *

These are the objections which the strict imputationists bring from their standpoint. Some of them are absurd enough, to be sure, especially the last; but they suffice to show that, in the judgment of eminent defenders of the doctrine of original sin, it cannot stand upon this theory. Those who hold to this

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 210-213.

theory assert that it cannot stand on the other, or any other. We think both are right.

The doctrine of mediate imputation we understand to be affirmed and defended by Chalmers in the following citation :

“To determine the question, then, in how far the attaching of demerit to a sinful nature that man has brought with him into the world is agreeable to the moral sense of mankind, we should inquire how much or how little man requires to have within his view, ere his moral sense shall pronounce on the character either of any act or of any disposition that is submitted to his notice. One may see a dagger projected from behind a curtain, and in the firm grasp of a human hand, and stretched with sure and deadly aim against the bosom of an unconscious sleeper; and, seeing no more, he would infer of the individual who held this mortal weapon that he was an assassin, and that he deserved the death of an assassin. Had he seen all he might have seen that this seeming agent of the murder which had just been perpetrated was in fact a struggling and overpowered victim in the hands of others; that he, the friend of the deceased, was pitched upon, in the spirit of diabolical cruelty, as the unwilling instrument of the deed which he abhorred; that for this purpose the fatal knife was clasped or fastened to his hand, and his voice was stifled by violence; and he was borne in deepest silence to the spot by the strength of others; and there was he, in most revolting agony of heart, compelled to thrust forward his passive, or rather, his resisting arm, and immediately to strike the exterminating blow into the bosom of a much-loved companion. Who does not see that the moral sense, when these new circumstances come into view, would immediately amend, or rather reverse, and that totally, the former decision which it had passed upon the subject—that he, whom he deemed the murderer, and chargeable with all the guilt of so foul an atrocity, it would most readily

absolve from all the blame and all the condemnation—that it would transfer the charge to those who were behind him, and pronounce them to be the murderers—that he who held the dagger and performed the deed was innocent of all its turpitude, because the victim of a necessity which he could not help, and against which he had wrought and wrestled in vain : and thus, ere it passes such a sentence as it feels to be righteous, must it look not merely to the act but to the intention, not merely to the work of the hand but to the will of the heart which prompted it.

“ Now, if we have any right consciousness of our own moral feelings, or any right observation of the moral feelings of others, the mind of man, in order to be made up as to the moral character of any act that is submitted to its notice, needs to know what the intention was that originated the act, but needs no more. It makes no inquiry as to what that was which originated the intention.* Give it simply to understand that such is the intention of a man who is not under derangement, and therefore knows what he is purposing and what he is doing ; and then, without looking farther, the moral sense comes at once to its summary estimate of the moral character of that which is under contemplation. Let us see a man who has done a murderous act, in the circumstances which we have just now specified, and we do not look upon him as a criminal, because we find that the act originated in the will of others and against his own will. Let us see a man who has done a murderous act, and was instigated thereto by a murderous disposition, and we cannot help looking upon him as a criminal—finding as we do that the act originated in his own will. An act against the will indicates no demerit on the part of him who

* This entire line of argument locates culpability in the inherited disposition to sin. There is no more effectual way to make us guilty for Adam's sin than this. The disposition was engendered of that act, and in no other way, and we are made guilty on account of it.

performed it. But an act with the will gives us the full impression of demerit. The philosopher may amuse himself with the ulterior query: What was it that originated the will? But the peasant has no metaphysics and no speculation for entertaining such a topic; and yet he has just as fresh and just as enlightened a sense of the demerit of a bad action coming from a bad intention as the most curious and contemplative inquirer has, whose restless appetite is ever carrying him upward among the remote and hidden principles of the phenomena that are around him. To get a right moral estimate of any given act we must carry our view up from the act of the hand to the disposition of the heart; but we need to carry it up no farther. The moment that the disposition is seen the moral sense is correspondingly affected, and rests its whole estimation, whether of merit or of demerit, not on the anterior cause which gave origin to the disposition, but on the character which it now bears, or the aspect under which it is now seen and contemplated before you.

“How the disposition got there is not the question which the moral sense of man, when he is unvitiated by a taste for speculation, takes any concern in. It is enough for the moral sense that the disposition is there. One may conceive with the Manichæans of old two eternal beings—one of whom was essentially wicked and malignant and impure, and the other of whom was essentially good and upright and compassionate and holy from everlasting. We could not tell how these opposite dispositions got there, for there they behooved to be from the unfathomable depths of the eternity that is behind us; yet that would not hinder us from regarding the one as an object of moral hatefulness and dislike, and the other as an object of moral esteem and moral approbation. It is enough that the dispositions exist, and it matters not how they originated, or if ever they had an origin at all. And, in like manner, give us two

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human individuals—one of whom is revengeful and dishonest and profligate and sensual, and the other of whom is kind and generous and honorable and godly—our moral sense, on the simple exhibition of these two characters, leads us to regard the one as blamable and the other as praiseworthy—the one as rightly the object of condemnation and punishment, and the other as rightly the object of approval and reward. And in so doing it does not look so far back as to the primary or originating cause of the distinction that obtains between these two characters. It looks so far back as to reach its contemplation from the act of the outer man to the disposition of the inner man; but there it stops. Give to its view a wrong act originating in a wrong intention, and it asks no more to make up its estimate of the criminality of what has been offered to its notice. It troubles not itself with the metaphysics of prior and originating causes; and, however the deed in question may have originated, let it simply have emanated from a concurring disposition on the part of him who has performed it, and be a deed of wickedness—then does it conclude that the man has done wickedly and that he should be dealt with accordingly.

“We know very well what it is that stumbles so readily the speculative inquirer into this mystery. He thinks that a man born with a sinful disposition is born with the necessity of sinning, and that to be under such a necessity exempts him from all blame and all imputation of guiltiness in having sinned. But so long as he is under this feeling, though not very conscious of the delusion, he is in fact confounding two things which are distinct the one from the other. He is confounding the necessity that is against the will with the necessity that is with the will. The man who struggled against the external force that compelled him to thrust a dagger into the bosom of his friend was operated upon by a necessity that was against his will, and you exempt him from all charge of criminality in

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the matter. But the man who does the very same thing at the spontaneous bidding of his own heart—whose will prompted him to the act, and who gave his consent and his choice to this deed of enormity—this is the man whom you irresistibly condemn and you irresistibly recoil from. With such a disposition as he had it was perhaps unavoidable; but the very having of such a disposition makes him in your eye a monster of moral deformity. If there was a kind of necessity here it was a necessity of an essentially different sort from the one we have just now specified, and ought therefore not to be confounded with it. It is necessity with the will, and not against it; and by the law, both of God and man, the act he has committed is a crime, and he is treated as a criminal.

“The only necessity which excuses a man for doing what is evil is a necessity that forces him by an external violence to do it against the bent of his will struggling most honestly and determinedly to resist it. But if it be with the bent of the will, if the necessity he lies under of doing the evil thing consists in this, that his will is strongly and determinedly bent upon the doing of it—then such a necessity as this, so far from extenuating the man’s guiltiness, just aggravates it the more, and stamps upon it, in all plain moral estimation, a character of fuller atrocity. For set before us two murderers, and the one of them differing from the other in the keenness and intensity of his thirst for blood. We have already evinced to you how there is one species of necessity which extinguishes the criminality of the act altogether—even that necessity which operates with violence upon the muscles of the body and overbears the moral desires and tendency of the mind. But there is another species of necessity which heightens the criminality of murder—even that necessity which lies in the taste and tendency of the mind toward this deed of unnatural violence. And if of these two assassins of the cave or of the highway the one was

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pointed out to us who felt the most uncontrollable impulse toward so fell a perpetration, and to whom the fears and the cries and the agonies of the trembling victim ministered the most savage complacency—he of the two, even in spite of the greater inward necessity that lay upon him, he, in the breast of every plain and unsophisticated man, would raise the sensations of keenest indignancy, and be regarded by all as the one whom the voice of justice most loudly demanded as a sacrifice to the peace and the protection of society.

“It is enough then that a disposition to moral evil exists; and, however it originated, the disposition in itself, with all the evil acts which emanate therefrom, calls forth, by the law of our moral nature, a sentiment of blame or reprobation. It may have been acquired by education; or it may have been infused into us by the force of surrounding example; or it may be the fruit, instead of the principle, of many willful iniquities of conduct; or, finally, it may, agreeably to the doctrine of original sin, have been as much transmitted in the shape of a constitutional bias from father to son as is the ferocity of a tiger, or the industry of an ant, or the acidity of an apple, or the odor and loveliness of a rose. When we look to the beauty of a flower we feel touched and attracted by the mere exhibition of the object; nor is it necessary that we should know when this property sprung into existence. When we taste the sourness of a particular fruit it matters not to the sensation whether this unpleasant quality is due to the training of the tree, or to some accident of exposure it has met with, or finally to some inherent universal tendency diffused over the whole species and derived through seeds and acorns from the trees of former generations. When assailed by the fury of some wild, vindictive animal, we meet it with the same resentment and inflict upon it the same chastisement or revenge, whether the malignant rage by which it is actuated be the sin of its nature

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derived to it from inheritance or the sin of its education derived to it from the perverse influence of the circumstances by which it has been surrounded. And lastly, when moral corruption is offered to our notice in the character of man—when we see a depraved will venting itself forth in deeds of depravity—when in every individual we meet with we behold an ungodliness or a selfishness or a deceit or an impurity, which altogether make the moral scenery of earth so widely different from the moral scenery of heaven, it positively makes no difference to our feeling of loathsomeness and culpability wherewith we regard it whether the vitiating taint rises anew on every single specimen of humanity, or whether it has run in one descending current from the progenitor of our race, and thence spread the leprosy of moral evil over all succeeding generations. The doctrine of original sin leaves the distinction between virtue and vice just where it found it; nor does it affect the sense of moral approbation wherewith we regard the former, or the moral dislike and feeling of demerit in which the latter ought to be regarded.

“There is not a more effectual way of bringing this to the test than by making one man the object of injustice and of provocation from another man. Let a neighbor inflict upon any of you some moral wrong or moral injury—will not the quick and ready feeling of resentment rise immediately in your hearts? Will you stop to inquire whence your enemy has derived the malice or the selfishness under which you suffer? Is it not simply enough that he tramples upon your rights and interests, and does so willfully—is not this of itself enough to call out the sudden reaction of an angry judgment and a keen retaliation upon your part? If it be under some necessity which operates against his disposition this may soften your resentment. But if it be under that kind of necessity which arises from the strength of his disposition to do you harm—this, so far from softening, would just whet and stimulate your

resentment against him. So far from taking it as an apology, that he is forcibly constrained by the obstinate tendency of his will to injure and oppress you—this would just add to the exasperation of your feelings; and the more hearty a good will you saw he had to hurt or to traduce or to defraud you, the more in fact would you hold him to be the culpable subject of your most just and righteous indignation.

“These remarks may prepare the way for all that man by his moral sense can understand or go along with in the doctrine of the imputation of Adam’s sin to all his posterity. We confess that we are not able to perceive how one man is at all responsible for the personal doings of another whom he never saw, and who departed this life many centuries before him. But if the personal doings of a distant ancestor have, in point of fact, corrupted his moral nature, and if this corruption has been transmitted to his descendants—then we can see how these become responsible, not for what their forefathers did, but for what they themselves do under the corrupt disposition that they have received from their forefathers.* And if there be a guilt attachable to evil desires, as well as to evil doings, and if the evil desire which prompted Adam to his first transgression enter into the nature of all his posterity—then are his posterity the objects of moral blame and moral aversion, not on account of the transgression which Adam committed, but on account of such a wrong principle in their hearts as would lead every one of them to the very same transgression in the very same circumstances.† It is thus that Adam has trans-

* Here it seems to dawn upon the mind of the illustrious author that the guilt is not for the having the disposition which is entailed, but for the acts which are performed under the instigation of the inherited disposition; but under the fear that he has gone too far, and possibly put in peril his beloved Calvinism, he immediately hedges.

† Here he falls into the slough of mediate imputation; our guilt is not guilt for his act, but guilt for our own depravity, which comes to us as unavoidable consequence of his act.

mitted a guilt the same with his own, as well as a depravity the same with his own, among all the individuals and families of our species—if not that each of them is liable to a separate reckoning on account of the offense committed in the garden of Eden, at least that each of them is liable to a separate reckoning on account of his own separate and personal depravity—a depravity which had its rise in the offense that was then and there committed; and a depravity which would lead in every one instance to the same offense in the same circumstances of temptation. According to this explanation every man still reapeth not what another soweth, but what he soweth himself. Every man eateth the fruit of his own doings. Every man beareth the burden of his own tainted and accursed nature. Every man suffereth for his own guilt, and not for Adam's guilt; and if he is said to suffer for Adam's guilt the meaning is that from Adam he inherits a corruption which lands him in a guilt equal to that of Adam.*

“Many, we are aware, carry the doctrine of imputation farther than this, and make each of us liable to answer at the bar of God's judicature for Adam's individual transgression. We shall only say of this view at present that, whether it be scriptural or not, we are very sure that we cannot follow it by any sense of morality or rightfulness that is in our own heart.” †

In seeking the home of sin Dr. Chalmers goes back thus, as we see, of any action of will, and finds it to consist of a disposition to wrong or sinful choices. To the objection that this

* This is an amazing statement, both for its contradictions and its heinous principle. First, every man is guilty, not for what Adam did, but in consequence of what Adam did. Second, his guilt is equal, for what Adam did, to the guilt of Adam himself. Adam guilty for his act, every man equally guilty with him on account of the corruption which flows to him from the act.

† He proceeds. He hesitates at this idea, as if it were more atrocious than his own; but in what respect is it more objectionable than his own? Is there any difference in ethical principle between imputing guilt to his posterity for his individual act—making them guilty for it—and making them guilty for an inherited consequence of it?

locates the cause or origin out of the subject he replies that the origin of the disposition has nothing whatever to do with its subject. It is simply the fact of it that makes the sin. It makes no difference how the subject came by it; it is the fact that he has it that constitutes him a sinner. This idea is put forward with great boldness, and is repeated by all subsequent authors, as if it were axiomatic: as it is the ferocity of the tiger or the poison of a reptile that makes it worthy of death, and not the manner of its coming to possess it, so it is the fact of sin, and not the source or manner of its origin, that renders man deserving of wrath. A more vicious fallacy could scarcely be uttered—one more subversive of fundamental ethical ideas. The true maxim is precisely the reverse; it is not a question what a man is that determines whether he is a sinner or not, but it is the question, How did he become what he is?—a question as to the origin of his state. It is not a question as to whether he is evil or not, but a question as to how he became evil, as to what responsibility he has in the premises. If the evil can be traced to him as cause, he is sinner in the evil; if it cannot, he is not the sinner but the sufferer simply. The sinner in every possible case is the originator of the sin. To find the sinner, therefore, the quest is for the cause, not for the fact merely.

We have been at the pains of this extended extract for two reasons: First, that it puts the argument for a corrupt tendency and inherited evil disposition in our human nature in a clear and unanswerable form, and shows that it is not only universal—a race fact—but also how deep and radical it is, tracing it, as we are convinced, to its true origin in the primal sin, a state in which we are not involved by creation but by defection; a state originated by sin and transmitted as calamity, the justice of which will be considered further on. Second, that we might have the view of the author quoted as to the guilt it involves, and his best reasons for asserting guilt.

Dr. Chalmers's position is: (*a*) that the evil disposition is by inheritance. With this we find ourselves in hearty accord; (*b*) that it is ground of guilt. From this we dissent. We consider it a great evil, and one from which the soul must be delivered in order to its final holiness and happiness; but we deny that *per se*, separate and apart from the act of the individual will, it involves sin, on the general ground that it is impossible that anything inherited can involve guilt, and for many reasons which will appear in the examination of the several theories which hold on different grounds the same general position.

His position is that of Edwards, and many other sympathizing writers, that the native disposition to evil is itself culpable. At first view it has the appearance of almost an ethical maxim, but it will not bear the test of examination. It seems to mean the same as to say that sin and guilt reside in the intention, which is a true maxim, if the intention be to do that which is perceived or supposed to be wrong, but in fact it differs *in toto* from it. Inherited disposition does not even involve intention; in fact, it of necessity excludes it; it, from the nature of the case, must be absolutely unintended. Intention, which is the essential element in determining an act or state to be culpable, is wholly wanting. No man ever intended to be born with a disposition to sin. He and those who sympathize with him assert that we need not go behind the native disposition, and inquire whence it came, in order to find guilt—the disposition itself involves that. We assert that, in order to make it ground of culpability, that is the very thing we must do. If the disposition is, like that of the tiger, an inherited nature, it has no more moral character than has the tiger. To find culpability we must go deeper, and determine whether the person, as a free willing being, chooses the disposition or the indulgence of its promptings; then we may predicate guilt; but if it is simply an

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abnormalcy which exists wholly independent of him it can have no more moral quality than the venom in a viper. Like any other disposition, it may be detestable; we kill the rattlesnake and the tiger, but we do not dream of imputing guilt or of punishing them. We incarcerate lunatics, but we do not accuse them of crime. This the author quoted seems to recognize when he attempts to show that an inherited disposition is not necessitated, but free. A balder sophism cannot be conceived. He makes disposition a product of the will. Doubtless he means that what a man is disposed to do he chooses to do—as if the terms were identical; the disposition would then be matter of choice. But that is precisely what is denied when it is declared to be hereditary. What a man, in the full possession of freedom to the opposite choice, chooses to do is the ground of ethical quality, and nothing else is or can be. That for which he is responsible is that of which he is free cause, and never is or can be that of which he is not the cause; much less is it something which he never had power to prevent, but which descends to him as a fatal heirloom from a sinning ancestor. The depravity which is inborn and universal is malady, but not sin. It demands cure, but not punishment. It renders sin certain, but not inevitable under redemption. It furnishes no excuse for sin, but to treat it as sin would be the injustice of making misfortune a crime. Personal depravity is not natal depravity. Nor is natal depravity personal, though it be a depravity of the person.

Our objection to the doctrine of mediate imputation is manifold. The fact of depravity—congenital corruption—is not, and cannot, with reason, be disputed; on the contrary, it is accepted as undoubtedly true, but it is not admitted that it is sin; or if in any case it is called sin it is with such accommodation as to deprive the word of its ordinary acceptance.

Sin as guilt it cannot be, for the following reasons:

The matter of which the party is accused is hereditary. This is admitted by the accusers; it is even a fundamentative of their system. It is expressly laid in the charge. But that which is hereditary cannot exist by fault of him who inherits, since it has its origin along with his being, and necessarily, therefore, before he could be at fault. Its cause is not in him, but out of him. There may be guilt concerning it, but it cannot be his guilt, since in him it is an effect descending from a cause which operated in his production. There is a fault, it is true, in his nature, since his nature ought not to be corrupt; but the fault that is in him is not by his fault—is not of him, as cause, or by him, as agent; it is a fault he suffers, not a fault he originates. To call it sin, and his sin, is to pervert language. To accuse him of sin on account of it is to abuse and misrepresent him. To condemn and punish him for it is to add injury to misfortune or injustice to calamity. The whole idea that there can be sin without personal fault, without something in the cause of which the person is implicated, is against plainest dictates of common sense.

It is important, in the whole controversy, that it be kept in mind what sin, guilt, and punishment import; and especially since attempts are made to confuse the sense. Whatever meaning be attached to the word sin, it is, confessedly by all the parties in the controversy, that which renders the subject of it liable to punishment. That is, it is something for which the person is justly exposed to be banished from the presence of God, and condemned to whatever is included in hell torments for eternity. Thus the sin and guilt which are conveyed to an unborn child by its father in the act of its generation are such that it may justly be subjected to eternal punishment; are such that it will be doing it no wrong, but just precisely what ought to be done, when it is given over to endless wrath. To the question, Why, on what principle, should it be so dealt with?

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the answer, and the only answer, is, Because its father begat it. Now, he who can believe this ceases to be a fit subject with whom to reason. He is simply a lunatic; either he cannot comprehend the meaning of terms or his moral nature has become deprived of primitive and *a priori* instincts, intuitions, judgments.

It is true that Adam's sin did bring much suffering upon his innocent offspring, but the most serious of all the forms of suffering it did not bring—the divine wrath and exclusion from his kingdom. It brought calamity, but it did not bring punishment. Dr. Hodge does not seem to be able to see the difference. I judge that this want of capacity is not common. That a child should inherit gout or abnormal lusts from a father, I judge most persons are able to perceive, is quite a different thing from inheriting hell. That in the first case the child may be an object of pity, not of wrath, most people will be able, I must judge, to think quite possible—even probable. Is it said, Yes; but he made the constitution under which such consequences arise; and he made the consequences inevitable to the sin; and the consequences show the evil of sin and his displeasure against sin, therefore they are penal inflictions? The first part of the statement is true; the conclusion is false, and does not follow from the premises. The truth is he established a constitution under which he determined to inflict certain penalties upon the transgressor for his sin, and under which sin might appear by its injurious effects upon others—either as it should consist in harmful acts against others or as it should be occasion of harm to others.

But is it said, What is the difference, since they suffer in both cases, whether it be called punishment or not? I answer, All the difference in the world; since, if it were punishment, it would be criminal injustice, but, as it is injury, it shows the sin of its criminal cause but not the injustice of the government.

That it should be permitted, even, would be the grossest injustice if it were not incident to a plan which may bring good to the unfortunate sufferer out of it; but that it should be penal and final were at once atrocious and diabolical.

But it is insisted that our depravity is a bar against the favor of God, and such as to shut us out from eternal life; and must therefore justly expose us to eternal death and displeasure. This is the most plausible of all the arguments we have noticed, and we will examine it with the care it deserves.

Much ingenious writing has been expended on this point, but, we must think, without success. Depravity is a bar to communion with God, and so to his favor and the enjoyment of eternal life. It is a thing with which he is displeased; he is displeased with its cause and with the effect. It must be removed. We admit all this, but does this imply that they who suffer are guilty and punishable therefor? Nothing of the kind. That they might be justly barred from the communion of God therefor? Nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it implies this: that—seeing they suffer this evil without any fault of their own—mercy and grace, not to say justice, will provide a remedy for it; will see that the impediment of nature shall be removed and these disabled souls shall be enabled; the impediment which they had no part in creating shall be removed out of the way.

As we understand it, it is thus: The children of Adam, without any fault of their own, come into the world in an abnormal condition, with an inherent tendency to sin, a natural estrangement from God, called native depravity, or inherited corruption of nature. This fact hinders their communion with God. It must be removed, or they cannot enjoy his fellowship. God is displeased with the existence of this hindrance. But as he knows it is not the fault of the subject of it; that, in fact, he is an innocent victim in the case, injured by but not sinning in

it, he is not displeased with him, not wrathful against him; rather, he pities him, and provides a remedy for him, and undertakes, like a merciful God as he is, to help him out of it. Instead of cursing and sending him to perdition for it he offers to cure him. But he won't be cured.

The case now changes. A new fact develops which brings the parties into entirely new relations. Now the person, before innocent, becomes the guilty cause; he by consent perpetuates his depravity in refusing a proffered cure.

The result is that the theory that we are born in a state of sin and guilt is without foundation and contradictive of the plainest dictates of reason. Hence the utter confusion into which its advocates have fallen, mutually subverting and destroying each other. Every attempt to explain is unsatisfactory, because it is an attempt to explain what intuitive reason declares not only is not, but cannot be, true. The several solutions not only antagonize each other, but each is discordant with itself, and all with first beliefs. No possible evidence could sustain the doctrine, any more than proof could sustain the assumption that justice and injustice are identical. No amount of explanation can show why or how that is true which is intuitively known to be false. Each new attempt only adds to absurdity and increases the confusion. It is the old folly reenacted of showing why it is that a fish placed in a given volume of water adds neither to its bulk nor weight. The theory must long ago have been abandoned, under the rebuke of insulted reason, but for its essential importance to a system of which it is a part—and by no means the most inadmissible part.

Its chief grounds of defense are two: First, that it is the doctrine of the divine word, and therefore must be true or the word itself be rejected. This argument must have weight with all Christians.

Our answer is in two parts: First, that the divine word can-

not assert that to be true which the divine voice within us declares to be false, since the divine utterance cannot be contradictory. Should a passage be found, or a number of them, which seems to teach the doctrine it could avail nothing if opposed to dicta of original reason; for the mind has no power to believe against these. This is admitted by the advocates of the doctrine itself, in their fruitless efforts to reconcile the difficulty, and is made available by one party against the method of another. The proper attitude of the mind in every such case is this: Here is a passage which seems to teach a doctrine which is contradictory of, first, self-evident truths, the original dicta of reason; but these we cannot doubt, therefore the passage cannot teach what it seems to teach. It matters nothing how direct and plain the terms employed, the verdict must be the same. Rational and sound interpretation demands that the passage either be held in abeyance or accommodated. Language is too uncertain a medium to enforce a seeming sense against a primary cognition. The idea may be something else than that which it appears to be; we may not be able to ascertain what, it may elude our most diligent search, but it is certain that it cannot be such as to oppose God to himself. That we know.

Is it said, This canon subjects revelation to reason, and strips the word of its supreme authority in matters of faith? We answer, No! What the word teaches is final. It is only a question, What does it teach? Reason must determine this. Some things reason declares it cannot teach because they are known not to be true; therefore when, from the imperfection of language, the Bible seems to teach them we know there is a mistake, an improper apprehension of its utterance. This plain canon has always been admitted, and must obtain until men renounce their reason. The divines have invariably availed themselves of it in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity: when charged with holding the doctrine in a sense to contradict

reason they deny, and admit that the thing is impracticable, but they explain that there must be some sense in which it is true, since it is revealed. What that sense is is a mystery, unknown and inexplicable. They do not embrace contradictory ideas on the authority of the text. They do not because they cannot. It is a law of mind. What is enforced upon us as a belief on intuitive grounds cannot be displaced on logical grounds; no argument here can supplant the certainty there. This is what we demand in the case under consideration: that we be allowed to find such ideas in the word as can be received without the rejection of what we know is true and therefore cannot reject!

Second, the passages which are adduced do not involve the necessity of supposing them so to teach, but may without violence be construed in harmony with the utterance of reason, so that there is no need to suppose a conflict or to resort to the canon we have laid down.

What is the position with respect to original sin? Not that men are sinners. This is undisputed. Not that all men are born depraved, with a tendency to sin, which depravity is called sin by accommodation, as leading to sin. This, also, is undisputed. Not that this depravity is derived from Adam, having its root in his first sin. This is undisputed. Not that we suffer in consequence of that sin and resulting depravity. This, also, is admitted. Upon these points we make no demurrer; but to these:

First, that we sinned in Adam's sin, or that his sin is laid to our charge as if we had sinned in him. This we deny, and insist that not a single passage of God's word so teaches.

Second, that we are accounted guilty, or ill deserving, either for his sin or the depravity which results to us from his sin. This we deny, and insist that no passage of the word of God so teaches.

Third, that we do suffer, or ever could have suffered, any

punishment for his sin or our resulting depravity. This we deny, and insist that no passage of Scripture teaches it. We admit suffering, but not punishment.

On the contrary, we hold that the word of God joins with reason to repudiate all three of these ideas in the most explicit manner.

The second ground is this: That we are in fact punished for Adam's sin or our resulting depravity; and since punishment presupposes guilt we must be guilty. Our answer is: We admit that punishment presupposes guilt, but deny the fact that we are punished and infer the very opposite: since we are not guilty we cannot be punished.

The ground upon which it is assumed that we are punished for Adam's sin, and on account of native guilt, is that our whole race suffers, even from the earliest infancy; and since it cannot be a punishment of their personal sin it must be for their sin in Adam.

The whole argument rests on the assumption that suffering and punishment are identical. This we deny, and for the argument upon which our denial rests refer to the section which treats of punishment.

Is it a fact that there is no distinction between calamities and punishments? Is suffering impossible except as punishment? When a government punishes a criminal does it punish his family? It must be obvious that there is a difference in the two cases of suffering which renders them entirely dissimilar in intent and kind. This is precisely the case, we find, under the divine government. Criminals are punished. The criminal deeds of criminals cause suffering to innocent persons; many times consist in injuries of the innocent; but are the injuries of the innocent their punishment?

There are yet two other schemes for accounting for the origin and prevalence of sin and depravity among men which deserve

brief mention. The first is that which supposes the souls of men to have had a former existence and probation, during which they sinned and fell. This theory has been broached from time to time along the Christian ages, but without meeting with sufficient favor to create a school of influence. Its most recent advocates are Julius Müller, in his very able treatise on *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, and Edward Beecher, in his *Conflict of Ages*. They find it impossible to account for all the facts of the problem in any other way, and fancy that in this idea there is relief. The idea is substantially that of a second probation—sinners in a former life are born into this life, into a condition of mitigated punishments, but under a provisional redemption of which they may avail themselves and attain to salvation. The fact of their former actual sin and guilt explains their hereditary sufferings and mitigated penalties. They are put on a new probation, as sinners under disfavor and with condemnation resting on them, but with helps to recovery, and with the chance, if they will, of reprieve. In this way the advocates of the scheme imagine they relieve the divine character and administration of injustice, and clothe both with compassionate beneficence.

The idea has its genesis in the horror of a system which teaches hereditary sin and guilt. Revolting at this, they take shelter in this scheme as a *dernier resort*. Reared in schools of Calvinistic and modified Calvinistic thought, which they find to be untenable and yet from the enslavement of which they are not able to free themselves, they accept this as a possible refuge.

It is only necessary to say that the assumption is a pure fancy, wholly unsupported by either reason or revelation. Nothing is, or can be, alleged for it—no facts of experience. The soul knows absolutely nothing of the assumed previous history. The Bible makes no sign of it. Reason finds no ground for it. It is a sheer imagination. The suggestion is so intrin-

sically absurd that in all the eager search for a possible solution of the problem it is unable to secure even a meager following. As it offers nothing to be believed it shows nothing to be refuted.

The remaining view is that which is held by Arminian divines, and which we advocate. What, then, is our view?

We hold that Adam is the natural head of the human race, and in a modified sense the covenant, or representative, head; that is, that, as natural head, his action, so far as it might affect his nature and condition, would also favorably or unfavorably affect the nature and condition of his posterity. We hold that morally he represented himself alone; that is, that, whatsoever he might do, the morality of his act would be exclusively his own, and he alone would be held for it. If he should remain innocent the nature and condition of nature in which he was created would descend to his posterity. Coming into existence thus with a normal nature, his children, as they became competent, would have been placed, each for himself, under obligations of law; that is, would have entered necessarily, as moral beings, upon a responsible course in which, by the same necessity, each one would stand accountable for himself. *Proxies do not exist in morals.*

He did not remain innocent. He sinned. We believe that his sin produced two effects. First, that it made him guilty and exposed him to the punishment written in the law—death, whatever that might be. Second, that it became the occasion of the withdrawment of the divine favor from him, and by this and other—to us unknown—causes he lost the balance and equipoise of his nature, and became extremely averse to good and inclined to evil. That such was the effect on his nature, by which we mean the tendencies of his entire powers of heart and mind and flesh, that, in himself, there remained no recovering power—he was totally overthrown. We believe that

under the operation of that mysterious law, which prevails through all being, under which like begets like, children born to him must have inevitably inherited his evil tendencies and disabilities; that, so, existence to them could have been nothing less than inevitable curse. We believe, therefore, that justice, not less than mercy, required either that the race should be estopped, or that a redeeming economy should be introduced by which the calamity might be turned to blessing. We believe, therefore, that in the sin of Adam the possibility of a seed from him perished—we died in him as potentialities, possibilities. The injunction against our existence was at the instance of the attributes justice and mercy.

We believe that at this point in logical order, but really in the eternal plan foreknown and arranged, the race took a new departure. The Redeemer became the head, in the room of the apostate Adam, so that, as we all died potentially in Adam the first, we were all made alive potentially in Adam the second. The existence of the race is a provision of redemption; each life is a redeemed life—a life taking its rise in redemption. Christ is the second head of the race, and in such sense its head that, but for his relation to it, there would be no race.

Under redemption the first Adam, the original head, who lost his headship by forfeit, was restored, and became the natural source of the race. Thus we exist by redemption through Adam.

Coming through Adam, as our natural head, we partake of his fall; inherit his degenerate and corrupt nature—his tendency to evil; a tendency so deep and radical that it would, unhindered, inevitably carry us to utter death; a state in which, as before stated, justice and mercy alike inhibited that we should be born, unless with or under a redemption, but in which we are permitted to be born under redemption, both by the consent of mercy and justice, for the reason that the inherited

depravity in us is guiltless, and for the reason that redemption provides for it a cure; and for the further reason that actual sins, springing from its hereditary weakness, under redemption may be pardoned, and so the entire race, though fallen, and actually sinning, may yet be saved, upon conditions and by helps thus reaching them through redemption. An existence that would have been an inevitable and unmixed curse—and, therefore, an impossible thing under a just dispensation—thus now, with redemption provided, becomes a gracious boon.

Thus we are found to agree with those who hold to congenital depravity, as to the fact and source of it, while we deny its guilt as *hereditary*.

We believe that in Jesus Christ, now our restoring head, the entire human race are born to a heritage of eternal life, which with all needful qualifications is secured to them unless, and until, by personal transgression it is forfeited; and that every human being, rising out of infancy into a responsible existence, is immediately placed upon a just and equitable probation for eternal life, each for himself, even as the first Adam was for himself.

We hold that, while inherited depravity is not itself ground of guilt as inherited, it becomes ground of guilt when it is voluntarily perpetuated by the refusal of the subject, after he has attained to responsibility, to have it overcome or removed by availing himself of the helps of redemption placed within his reach thereto. Innocently existing incipiently, the depravity may not be perpetuated without involving the subject in guilt—or only so far as it is impossible, by any use of responsible agency, that it should be eradicated or corrected. But even in such cases the guilt results from improper action as to the application of remedies rather than from the continued existence of the disorder. Guilt is in the will; either in its wrong action or inaction. The subject, as depraved, is shut away from com-

munion with God, and is held guiltily responsible, and an object of displeasure for failing to have the offensive impediment removed. He has now accepted it, and becomes guilty on account of it, as making it his own voluntary state. Primarily he had no responsibility in the premises, because it was a fact with whose existence he had no connection. Now, he is solely responsible because its continuance is by his consent or guilty inaction. His guilt is precisely in the degree in which it remains by his tolerance. So far as it is impossible to him to have it removed he is guiltless. This depraved nature, we allow, is sinful in these two senses: first, that it tends to sin from the beginning—tends to courses of action which in a responsible being would be sins; second, when tolerated, accepted, and followed by a responsible being, it is sin—or he becomes a sinner on account of it.

Further, we hold that in consequence of our depravity, as children of a fallen head, we inherit the fortunes of suffering and death; which to him were penal but to us are permitted as an inheritance of nature, and, far from being penal, are many times the chastisements and corrections of love and included in an economy of salvation.

Yet, further, we hold that our congenital depravity, while it does not involve guilt, is an evil of nature which needs to be removed; a root on which sin has a tendency to grow; an abnormal and ruinous condition which must be remedied in order to real spiritual life—the communion of God; it is of the nature of a malady from which the soul must be delivered in order to its happy existence; redemption, by which it is possible to exist, is remedial deliverance—that is, the soul is under agency of cure, and in the case of such as are removed from life before the period of personal accountability, such, therefore, as have not worked personal forfeiture of eternal life, we hold that the abnormal condition is unconditionally remedied, in a manner

to us unexplained, so that they are fitted for eternal life. In the case of those who attain to responsibility we hold that, by an act of faith on their part, the Spirit of God becomes a regenerating agent, freeing them from the dominion of depravity and renewing their fallen nature; restoring order and spiritual life; making them new creatures.

Finally, we hold that no man or angel ever did, or ever can, fail of the favor of God, or become subject to his displeasure, except by personal sin; that guilt and punishment are facts which require always and absolutely, as a necessary condition to their existence, a personal act of transgression—a renunciation of life. The entire race exist in Jesus Christ as a redeeming head; in no other way do or could they exist; and in him they must remain as redeemed until they take themselves personally out of his hands at the point where law meets them and personal disobedience severs them.

Still, it is said that our view does not relieve the case of the apparent injustice charged against the theory we reject, since we admit that great and manifold evils come to the race by inheritance, which is a manifest injustice if they are innocent.

To this we answer in two parts. If we were compelled to allow the first part of the statement it would involve no necessity of admitting the second part. It is conceivable that we might incur even serious disadvantage, and real temporary harm, under a perfectly just and equitable system. We have no right to assume that a condition less favorable than Adam's would be an injustice to his children. There may be a necessity in the nature of the case, which utmost goodness may not be able to overcome, why the offspring of transgressing ancestors should be less favorably circumstanced than if they had remained unsinning, and yet compensation be introduced which would make their condition not only not one of hardship but one of real and abundant kindness. Sin may be a factor whose

presence, on the whole, diminishes the good of every being in the universe, relatively to what it would have been had no sin been committed, and yet its presence may not impugn either the goodness or the justice of God toward general being.

The disadvantage might be real, even great, and might involve manifold perils and actual sufferings to the perfectly innocent without injustice, since innocence, as we have seen, does not imply exemption either from exposure or actual suffering, but only exemption from needless and unjust hardships and, especially, penal inflictions. It is conceivable that such might be our relations to Adam, or such our relations to our immediate ancestors, or to society around us, that the sin of anyone would limit or lessen our probationary heritage, and yet the damage imply no injustice to us in Him who so framed the constitution of the universe as to make such injury possible. The very fact which made the possibility of injury may be the fact which contains in it the highest substance of good. A son might so impair the father's fortune as really to lessen the estate and limit the income of all the other members of the family, and no actual wrong be done on the part of the father, who was thus hindered from doing by them as he would have done but for this circumstance. It seems to be a law of social life, inevitable to natures capable of sympathy and love, that there should be liability of one member to suffer with and by another; the wrong done by one or against one may painfully vibrate through the whole. In fact, the whole idea of duty with relation to another, the moral economy, involves the possibility that, either by neglect or malfeasance, one should be subject of temporary harm; but this does not imply injustice in the constitution.

The moral system is the crown and glory of all God's great and wonderful provisions; that without which the created universe would have been barren and incomplete, that without

which no note of rational joy or ecstasy of rational love or consciousness of worth could have existed in any realm; and yet that grandest and most significant work of all had to lay its corner stone in possibilities of deepest evil.

The Infinite saw fit to start moral races on a platform of innocence, and with natures attuned to right, and we do not see how he could have done otherwise, either in wisdom, or love, or justice; but this does not imply that a probation so projected was either the only conceivable form that might arise, or that it contained in it the greatest possible advantages. For aught we know to the contrary a scheme of probation might be perfected, for a race which had failed under the first form, that would redeem their failure and bring them to a most glorious culmination under its provisions. Who dare say that redemption was not foreseen to be an absolute need to the moral universe, to repair foreseen lapses under the rigors of law—and that, therefore, it was a primitive provision of the eternal plan, complementing and completing, with its greater glory, the first, or legal, scheme?

But now, having seen that hardships to the innocent might possibly arise under a moral system, and that this is a very different thing from the supposition that they might be justly punished for sins which they never committed, let us see whether there is any ground for the assumption that our condition has been greatly injured by Adam's sin.

To form a just judgment in the case we must contrast our case as it is under redemption with what it would have been under the primeval economy; compare what we lost under law with what we have gained under Gospel; what we had in our first head with what we have in our second Head. It may turn out, after all, that our loss is our gain; that, strange as it may sound, it is better for us to come into being fallen, under redemption and the operation of its restorative forces, than it

would have been to be born, unfallen, under the law; that what at first view seems to be so great a disaster will in the outcome prove to be to our advantage. This would be no utterly unique thing in the government of the Almighty Father, who is able to bring good out of evil and make the wrath and folly of men, and even devils, to praise him. If any should be disposed to say, The supposition is impossible, and even blasphemous, since it would be making sin a good, we answer, No; it would be nothing of the kind. It would leave the sin still the same; but it would be only allowing that infinite wisdom and love may be able in their boundless resources to overrule that which in itself is really evil, not so as to make it good, but so as to make it the occasion of a good not otherwise attainable. This seems to be the apostle's view in Rom. v, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Observe, what we say is not that our depravity is a good, or could ever become such, but that the evil which has happened to us becomes the occasion of an interposing mercy which makes our condition after it more secure, as to our highest good, than before it. Let us see how this might be.

Before the fall we were under law; since the fall, and by occasion of it, we are under grace.

Now, what was it to be under law? As to the persons, to be under law was to be in a state of innocence—to be as Adam was. Had he not sinned it is safe to infer that we, his children, would have inherited both his innocent nature and his moral position of innocence. That looks well for safety and happiness. But was he safe? Was there no avenue by which harm could reach him? The law read, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt *surely* die." Secure and blessed as it is death may come to this beautiful Eden. One trembles as he reads that dreadful covenant which puts eternity on the hazard of a single chance. Into that covenant the unfallen Adam

would have brought his unfallen children. I know it is assumed that, had he not sinned, his children would have been placed beyond the possibility of sinning; the hazard would have been forever passed. But this assumption is without shadow of foundation. The opposite fact is not only probable but is absolutely certain. Each moral being must stand for itself, and must for itself undergo the perils of probation. Is it not frightful to think of existence under an economy which provided no mercy for a single deviation, and with such surroundings that the very first experiment proved a disastrous failure! We do not accuse that economy of injustice, but we do say its possibilities were terrible. To a finite being, temptable in his nature, probation under a covenant that will allow of no extenuations, admit of no forgiveness, but will visit with remediless death the first transgression, is not a condition to be coveted, even though an unfallen being be the subject of it. Who is able to say that less possibilities of evil would be contained in the plan of individual probations under such a scheme than are involved in the economy of redemption?

What is the economy? In general it is the economy of probation for fallen beings. As to the persons there is this difference: Under the first economy they were unfallen, under the second they are fallen; under that the nature of the subject tended to righteousness, but with a possibility of temptation and sin; under this the nature tends to sin, but with a possibility of recovery; under that one failure was inevitable ruin, under this a million failures may be repented of and pardoned, and so the ruin be averted.

The contrast between a fallen and an unfallen world, it must be admitted, is painfully striking; between a nature stricken with the leprosy of depravity and a nature pure and innocent; between bodies filled with pain and disease and death and bodies thrilled with the vigors of diseaseless life; between homes

blighted and darkened with ignorance, malignity, and shame, and homes sacred and beautiful and holy ; between the sorrows and bereavements of a world full of anguish and graves and a world without tears and death. At first look, and on the surface, the advantage seems all one way ; but maybe it is not so. If we take a broader and deeper view we may find that birth in the darker world is, after all, more desirable.

It may be heresy, but for myself, deeply conscious as I am of the plague of a nature utterly sinful in its tendencies, I would rather be in the second head than in the first ; rather take my chances with Christ than with the unfallen Adam ; rather be born a fallen soul, in a fallen world, under the redemption of Jesus, with all sorrow and suffering brimming my cup of earthly life, than be born of Eve amid the bloom of paradise, with angel brothers around me, under the inevitable exposures and terrible dangers of an economy of unappeasable law ; rather take the certainties of sin, with the possibilities of pardon and recovery with a Saviour such as Jesus, than the hopes of fallible immaculateness without a redeemer. If others would choose Adam I would choose Christ. I am content to enter a fallen world through the gate of suffering if I may feel enfolding me the arms of the pitying, omnipotent Son of Mary, rather than an unfallen world, with the exigencies and perils of fallibility without a rescuer. If others would venture, of choice, on an eternity whose doom hangs in the balance of a single chance under the primeval law I would cling to the Seed of the woman, who saves to the uttermost of a thousand sins and falls. For, see : under the former, if there be innocence, it is innocence under law, innocence temptable ; innocence so frail that it perishes at the first breath of trial ; an innocence which, once forfeited, is irrecoverable ; one misstep, and all is lost ; one blunder, and a plunge into a hopeless eternity. Under the latter if there is taint there is cure ; if there is sin there is pardon. That

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had its tree of life, it is true, but it had also its flaming sword and its avenging angel; this also has its tree of life and its olive branch of promise and invitation of mercy. That rewarded the faithful, this opens its arms to the prodigal; that had no death, this has a grave—but also a conquering Jesus and a transforming resurrection; that opened heaven, through the clouds, to the unsinning; this opens heaven to the sinning, through Calvary and by the way of the tomb, with songs and shouts of redeeming victory. Again I say, if any would complain of the hardships of the probation of Adam's fallen seed, as compared with the probation of the unfallen, I have no complaints. To my thinking we gain more in the second than we lost in the first.

If we look on beyond probation we know not what was the possibility of innocence; what heights of glory were in reservation for them—where amid the ascending eternities they would have shone and sung. Doubtless their destiny would have been inconceivably glorious. Their powers indicate a progression in which culminations followed by still more ineffable culminations would have filled the measure of immortal existence. But will Jesus do less for his ransomed seed? Shall they who came up out of great tribulation, scarred on the battlefields of temptation and sin and bearing the marks of suffering and death incurred in the dreadful struggle, shall they, with robes washed in the blood of the Lamb, the purchase of Calvary's agony, have a less conspicuous glory? We venture to believe not. "Having suffered with him they shall also be glorified together."

With this view Chalmers seems to agree. He says:

"In the three verses that follow we have such a parallel drawn between the evil entailed upon us by the first Adam, and the good purchased and procured for us by the second Adam, as to evince that there is something more than compensation, but such an overbalance of blessedness provided to us by

the Gospel as may well serve to reconcile us to the whole of this wondrous administration. Rom. v, 15-17: 'But not as the offense, so also is the free gift: for if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification. For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.'

"We do feel that there is a considerable difficulty in this short passage; and the following is the only explanation that we are able to give of it. You will observe that in the fourteenth verse the effect of Adam's sin in bringing death upon his posterity is demonstrated by this circumstance that the sentence had full execution, even upon those who had not in their own persons sinned as he did. Death reigned even over them; and it made Adam to be the figure of Christ, that what the one brought upon mankind by his disobedience the other by his obedience did away.

"But Christ did more than do away the sentence which lay upon mankind because of the sin of Adam being imputed to them. This and no other sentence was all that could be inflicted on infants, or those who had not sinned actually. But in addition to the guilt that we have by inheritance there is also a guilt which all who live a few years in the world incur by practice. The one offense of Adam landed us in guilt; but the many offenses of the heart and life of us all have woefully accumulated that guilt. And we stand in need, not merely of as much grace as might redeem us from the forfeiture that was passed on the whole human family in consequence of the transgression of their first parent, but also of as much new grace as

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might redeem us from the curse and the condemnation of our own iniquities—as might redeem us, not merely from the debt that has been entailed upon us, but from the additional debt that has been incurred by us.

“And thus it is that not as the offense so also is the gift. For the gift by Christ compensates for more evil than the offense by Adam has entailed. Through that one offense the penalty of death passed upon many, even upon all whom Adam represented. But the grace of God, and the gift which emanated therefrom and was won for us by the one man Jesus Christ, greatly exceeds in its amount the recallment of this penalty from the many whom Christ represented. The condemnation we derive from Adam was passed upon us because of his one offense. The free gift of justification we receive from Christ not merely reverses that condition of guilt in which Adam has placed us, but that still more aggravated condition of guilt in which we have been placed by the multitude of our own offenses. We obtain, not only justification from the guilt of Adam’s one offense, but justification from the guilt of our own many offenses. Such was the virulent mischief even of the one offense that through it, and it alone, even when separated from all actual guilt, as in the case of infants, death reigned in the world. There was more grace needed, however, than would suffice merely to counteract this virulence, for greatly had it been aggravated by the abundance of actual iniquity among men; and for this there was an abundance, or, as it might have been translated, a surplus of grace provided, so that, while the effect of Adam’s single offense was to make death reign, greatly must the power of the restorative administered by the second Adam exceed the malignity of the sin that has been transmitted to us by the first Adam, inasmuch as it heals, not merely the hereditary, but all the superinduced diseases of our spiritual constitution, and causes those over whom death reigned, solely

on account of Adam's guilt, to reign in life, though for their own guilt as well as Adam's they had rightfully to die.

“This is all the length at which we can penetrate into this passage. We see affirmed in it the superiority of that good which Christ has done for us over that evil which Adam has entailed upon us. We see in it enough to stop the mouth of any gainsayer who complains that he has been made chargeable for the guilt which he never contracted; for we there see announced to us, not merely release from this one charge, but from all the additional charges which by our own willful disobedience we have brought upon ourselves. The heir of a burdened property, who curses the memory of his father and complains of the weight and hardship of the mortgages he has left behind him, ought in all justice to be appeased when his father's friend, moved by regard to his family, not only offers to liquidate the debts that were transmitted to him by inheritance, but also the perhaps heavier debts of his own extravagance and folly. From the mouth of a willful and obstinate sinner may we often hear the reproach of God for the imputation of Adam's sin to his blameless and unoffending posterity; and were he indeed a blameless individual who was so dealt with there might be reason for the outcry of felt and fancied injustice. But, seeing that in hardened impiety, or at least in careless indifference, he spends his days, living without God in the world and accumulating voluntarily upon his own head the very guilt against which he protests so loudly when laid upon him by the misconduct of another, this ought at least to mitigate a little the severity of his invective; and it ought wholly to disarm and to turn it when a covering so ample is stretched forth, if he will only have it, both for the guilt at which he murmurs and for the guilt of his own misdoings. Nor has he any right to protest against the share that has been assigned to him in the doom of Adam's disobedience, when, willfully as he has aggravated that doom upon

himself, there is a grace held out to him, and a gift by grace, which so nobly overpasses all the misery of man's unregenerate nature and all its condemnation.

“Perhaps there is a great deal more in this passage than we have been able to bring out of it. It is likely enough that the apostle may have had in his mind the state of the redeemed when they are made to reign in life by Jesus Christ, as contrasted with what the state of man would have been had Adam persisted in innocency, and bequeathed all the privileges of innocence to a pure and untainted posterity. In this latter case our species would have kept their place in God's unfallen creation and maintained that position in the scale of order and dignity which was at first assigned to them; and, though lower than the angels, would at least have shone with an unpoluted though a humbler glory, and have either remained upon earth, or perhaps have been transplanted to heaven, with the insignia of all those virtues which they had kept untainted and entire upon their own characters. Now, certain it is that the redeemed in heaven will be made to recover all that personal worth and accomplishment which was lost by the fall, and in point of moral luster will shine forth at least with all that original brightness in which humanity was formed; and in the songs of their joyful eternity will there be ingredients of transport and of grateful emotion which, but for a Redeemer to wash them from their sins in his blood, could never have been felt; and, what perhaps is more than all, they are invested with an order of merit which no prowess of archangel could ever win; they are clothed with a righteousness purer than those heavens which are not clean in the sight of infinite and unspotted holiness; they are seen in the face of Him who takes precedence over all that is created; and, besides being admitted into the honor of that more special and intimate relationship which subsists between the divine Messiah and those who are the fruit and

travail of his soul, it is indeed a wondrous distinction that the Son of God, by descending to the fellowship of our nature, has ennobled and brought up the nature of man to a preeminence so singularly glorious.

“Verses 18, 19: ‘Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.’”

“The three last verses state the disparity between the two Adams in respect of the amount of good and evil conveyed by them. The two before us state the similarity between them in respect of the mode of conveyance of this good and this evil. They contain, in fact, the strength of the argument for the imputation of Adam’s sin. As the condemnation of Adam comes to us, even so does the justification by Christ come to us. Now, we know that the merit of the Saviour is ascribed to us, else no atonement for the past, and no renovation of heart or of life that is ever exemplified in this world for the future, will suffice for our acceptance with God. Even so then must the demerit of Adam have been ascribed to us. The analogy affirmed in these verses leads irresistably to this conclusion. The judgment that we are guilty is transferred to us from the actual guilt of the one representative, even as the judgment that we are righteous is transferred to us from the actual righteousness of the other representative. We are sinners in virtue of one man’s disobedience, independently of our own personal sins; and we are righteous in virtue of another’s obedience, independently of our own personal qualifications. We do not say but that through Adam we become personally sinful, inheriting as we do his corrupt nature. Neither do we say but that through Christ we become personally holy, deriving out of his fullness the very graces which adorned his own char-

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acter. But, as it is at best a tainted holiness that we have on this side of death, we must have something more than it in which to appear before God; and the righteousness of Christ, reckoned unto us and rewarded in us, is that something. The something which corresponds to this in Adam is his guilt, reckoned unto us and punished in us; so that, to complete the analogy, as from him we get the infusion of the depravity, so from him also do we get the imputation of his demerit.

“One may suppose from the eighteenth verse that the number who are justified in Christ is equal to the number who are condemned in Adam, and that this comprehends the whole human race. But by the term ‘all,’ we are merely to understand, all, on the one hand, who are in that relation to Adam, which infers the descent of his guilt upon them; and that is certainly the whole family of mankind; and thus ‘all,’ on the other hand, who are in that relation to Christ which infers the descent of his righteousness upon them; and that is only the family of believers. As in Adam, it is said, all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But the ‘all’ does not refer to the same body of people. The first, who die in Adam, evidently refer to the whole human race. But the second, who live in Christ, are restricted by the apostle to those who are Christ’s, and will be made alive by him at his coming. All men have not faith, and all men therefore will not reign in life by Christ Jesus.

“For anything we know the mediation of Christ may have affected, in a most essential way, the general state of humanity; and, by some mode unexplained and inexplicable, may it have bettered the condition of those who die in infancy, or who die in unreached heathenism, and aggravated the condition of none but those who bring upon themselves the curse and the severity of a rejected Gospel. But the matter which concerns you is that, unless you receive Christ in time, you will never reign with him in eternity. You will not be admitted into the num-

ber of those all, who, though they comprehend the entire family of believers, do not comprehend any that obey not the Gospel ; and it is at your peril if, when the offer of an interest in the righteousness of Christ is placed within your reach, you turn in indifference away from it.

“ And it is of vital importance to you to know that the free gift, though it comes not upon you all in the way of absolute conveyance, it at least comes upon you all in the way of offer. It is yours if you will. The offer is unto all and upon all who now hear us, though the thing offered is only unto all and upon all who believe. We ask each individual among you to isolate himself from the rest of the species—to conceive for a moment that he is the only sinner upon the face of the earth, that none but he stands in need of an atoning sacrifice, and none but he of an everlasting righteousness brought in by another and that might avail for his justification before God. Let him imagine that for him, the one and solitary offender, Christ came on the express errand to seek and to save ; that for him he poured out his soul unto the death ; that for him the costly apparatus of redemption was raised ; that for him, and for him alone, the Bible was written ; and a messenger from heaven sent to entreat that he will enter into reconciliation with God, through that way of mediatorship which God in his love had devised, for the express accommodation of this single wanderer, who had strayed, an outcast and an alien, from the habitation of the unfallen, and that it now turns upon his own choice whether he will abide among the paths of destruction or be readmitted to all the honors and felicities of the place from which he had departed. There is nothing surely wanting to complete the warrant of such an individual for entering into hope and happiness ; and yet, ye hearers, it is positively not more complete than the warrant which each and which all of you have at this moment. To you, individually to you, God is holding out this

gift for your acceptance—you is he beseeching to come again into friendship with him. With you is he expostulating the cause of your life and your death, and bidding you choose between the welcome offer of the one and the sure alternative of the other if the offer is rejected. He is now parleying the matter with every hearer, and just as effectually as if that hearer were the only creature in the world to whom the errand of redemption was at all applicable. There is nothing in the multitude of hearers by whom you are surrounded that should at all deaden the point of its sure and specific application to yourself.

“The message of the Gospel does not suffer, in respect of its appropriateness to you, by the ranging abroad of its calls and its entreaties over the face of the whole congregation. The commission is to preach the Gospel to *every*; and surely that is the same with preaching the Gospel to *each*. It does not become less pointedly personal in its invitation by its being made more widely diffusive. The dispersion of the Gospel embassy over the face of the whole world does not abate by one single iota either the loudness or the urgency of the knock which it is making at your door. This is a property which no extension of the message can ever dissipate. It cannot be shipped off either in whole or in part by the missionary vessel which carries the news and the offers of salvation to other lands. Your minister speaks with no less authority though thousands and thousands more are preaching at the same moment along with him. Your Bible carries no less emphatic intimation to you, though Bibles are circulating by millions over the mighty amplitudes of population that are on every side of you. God, through the medium of these conveyances, is holding out as distinct an overture to you, and pledging himself to as distinct a fulfillment, as if you were the only sinner he had to deal with; and whether he beseeches you to be reconciled, or bids you come unto Christ on the

faith that you will not be cast out, or invites you, weary and heavy laden, to cast your burden upon him and he will sustain it, or sets forth to you a propitiation and tells you that your reliance upon its efficacy is all that is needed to make it effectual to you—be very sure that all this is addressed as especially to yourself as if you heard it face to face by the lips of a special messenger from heaven—that God is bringing himself as near as if he named you by a voice from the skies. So that if you, arrested by all this power and closeness of application, shall venture your case on the calls and the promises of the Gospel, there is not one call that will not be followed up, nor one promise that will not be fully and perfectly accomplished.”

Despite the virus of Calvinism in this citation—the strange mixture of truth with error which greatly mars its consistency and beauty—it nevertheless recognizes the fact that the race, though depraved through Adam, its natural head, gains more in Christ, the second Adam, than it lost in the first. It, though in self-contradiction, affirms the very doctrine that inherited depravity does not involve the guilt of those who suffer it—the guilt being removed by redemption before they are born. Its contradictory and inadmissible implications are manifold, but in it all there is the presence of the great truth that in Christ, by an act of grace, we are placed on an improved platform; a condition better than if the first Adam had maintained his allegiance. He affirms guilt of unsinning beings by imputation, which we deny, but he relieves them of guilt, before it reaches them, by the imputation of a righteousness which is another's. This, also, we cannot receive. But it aims at a truth, if it reaches it illogically and unethically. Many Arminians have followed the general trend of his position, simply interjecting a universal redemption against a limited one, considering hereditary guilt by imputation and offsetting it by imputed justification; an idea wholly inconsistent with the fundamental

principles of the Arminian system, and foisted upon it by the prevailing theologizing of the times.

The great bane of writings and thinkings on the subject is the attempt to preserve the mass of errors known as Calvinism. Now this theory is broached, now that, each subversive of the other, and all outraging rational and moral intuitions; and so the truth, which is plain and simple, is sacrificed to the interests of a system which is, and must forever be, indefensible. The fact of inherited abnormalcy is patent, and cannot be rationally disputed. Its guilt is unethical and impossible. A provisional redemption, helpful to regeneration and rendering freedom possible—as broad as the hurt—alone renders the propagation of a race so maimed possible under a just system. With such a provision, of universal application, no injustice is done to any, and the system may be the most beneficent possible.

Let no one say that this implies that the primal sin and the consequent fall of the race in its head are a good. This is not a legitimate inference from anything here affirmed or supposed. Sin—in itself—is the greatest evil possible under a beneficent and just administration. There is for it no possible excuse, not a single redeeming circumstance. Had it not occurred there could have been nothing to mar the harmony of the universe or the happiness of beings capable of immortal blessedness; nothing to grieve or offend a holy and beneficent God. There would have been limitations, restrictions, discipline; these are necessary incidents of any possible created system, and especially of the highest, in which moral beings exist. There might have been forms of suffering, coincident with sensational existence. These, for aught that we know, are unavoidable concomitants of every universe in which any kind of enjoyment is possible. But under the movements and government of infinite love, save for sin, highest welfare would have been secured. Sin alone darkens the universe and prevents the outcome of

complete and perfect happiness and highest holiness, which is the aim of creation. It mars all beauty, ruins all loveliness that it touches. The evil may be beyond the power of the Infinite to prevent or completely to remedy in the best system. We venture to affirm that it is. In itself it is unmixed evil. It serves no end of goodness. But it is not unlimited evil, or evil which may not be overruled for good, or a universe in which it exists never would have been created. Despite it an infinite glory of beneficence and goodness will yet crown the great creative scheme; and its occurrence will be made the occasion—and, so far as we can perceive, the only way—for the complete revelation and exercise of the most glorious of the divine attributes: holy, compassionating, and forgiving love. What is implied in the statement above is this: That under the government of mere law sin is utterly destructive. The chances of any moral existence attaining its supreme welfare are restricted to utter and unswerving obedience. This is an ethical fact. Law provides no reprieves and gives no chance for recovery. If obeyed it works life, with all possible benefits; but if disobeyed it kills inexorably. Under redemption there is a provision for pardons. It is thus that in Christ we gain more than we lost in our natural head: a scheme of mercy and helps. It is infinite love broadening the possibilities of welfare where its perils are increased.

We close this discussion on the doctrine of original sin, so called, with some general reflections and deductions.

By the doctrine as defined by its advocates is meant guilt for a nature which by inheritance tends to sin. We have admitted such a nature, and have contended that, while in no proper sense ground of guilt, yet it is an evil which must be remedied in order to the soul's peace and moral purity. We now add that impurities of nature become ground of actual guilt whenever the soul freely tolerates their existence and

volitionally acquiesces in them. They then become personal acts, or states with respect to which the will either directly acts or criminally fails to act. In either and both cases alike they are chargeable to the will—as criminal defects or overt and criminal causes.

Inherited dispositions or tendencies—in themselves innocent, but working to sin when not repressed, and more when indulged—not only add to their strength but become deepest sin. The soul by its own consent becomes filled with all manner of moral impurities; the whole inner nature is defiled and becomes a fountain of all manner of unholiness—the hotbed of the very essence of all sin. Men thus volitionally multiply and intensify their own depravity. This condition is not to be attributed to inherited tendencies, alone considered, but directly to the willful wrongdoing of the person himself. This self-superinduced moral loathsomeness is spiritual death, a product of the will itself. Depravity so superinduced is sin; “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint,” and within there is naught but “wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” This outcome is a condition of depravity wrought by us, not born with us. To natural tendency it adds active will concurrence. A soul so defiled is not only morally abnormal, with evil tendencies such as come with its nature, but it is a soul which has corrupted itself and rendered itself guilty of all its added impurities. It is dead in trespasses and sins. For its state it cannot refer to the sin of its first parents, nor can it plead inability to have it otherwise—the necessitation of an inborn nature. It is defiled and corrupted and filled with all manner of unrighteousness by its own free personal inaction or positive action.

There can be no doubt that many of those who plead for original guilt identify it in their thought with this self-superinduced depravity; and knowing the guilt of such a state they attribute it, under the general name of original sin, to the nature

which we inherit. A more radical and conspicuous error can scarcely be conceived. The nature has a tendency. The will creates the fruitage. "Lust when it is permitted to conceive bringeth forth sin"—guilt. No child of man was ever born in this state; every child of man is born with a tendency to it; it is reached only by personal consent and coaction.

Can the tendency to sin be resisted? If not, then abnormalcy must issue in actual sin. But nothing that is a necessary result can be sin. Sin is not only of the will, but it is of the will in freedom. Indeed, there is no proper will act where freedom does not exist. This point will be fully developed when we come to consider redemptive helps. To suppose the native tendencies to sin irresistible, and then to assume that they are inherited, leaves all born in such a condition already damned—with their birth, and before their sin, and not on account of it.

Does the fact of a fallen nature modify the guilt of those who become actual transgressors under its inheritance? That the fallen nature, and all the evil environment which encompasses life in a fallen world, will be taken into account in determining the measure of guilt of any and every fallen soul cannot be questioned. God will judge righteously. Any sin has in it the essence of all sin, but there are degrees of turpitude. Nothing is more certain than that under the government of God no soul of man will have less than perfectly fair dealing. No soul will be held as guilty that is not itself guilty; no disabilities, not self-superinduced, will be laid to its charge. If there are mitigating circumstances they will not fail to be valued at their full worth. Infinite love, which differs nothing from infinite justice regulated by unerring wisdom, holds the balance. There will be no mistake; nothing of mitigating circumstance left out, nothing of overweening severity permitted. The hand that holds the scale is the Father's hand, tempered by the added

intercessions of a Redeemer's tenderness. But guilt is guilt, and neither love nor mercy can change it.

On this subject—that of race depravity, inherited tendencies to sin—before finally dismissing it, we have this one thing further to say:

It is not an unforeseen accident. The plan which included it was adopted with perfect foresight. It was fully provided for by a prearranged scheme of redemption. The misfortunes that have overtaken the race under it are more than compensated. Evils have arisen, and evils will remain, but they are such as are incident to any moral system, under any possible regulations; we may rest assured that they are the very least that would have occurred under any possible moral system, and the benefits are the greatest that could be secured by any system. This we are constrained to believe if we retain the belief that God is infinite in goodness. The two propositions stand or fall together.

A question arises, Are there no circumstances in which punishment for sins may be remitted? Does divine justice inexorably require the forfeit in all cases? Or may circumstances exist in which justice will accept less than its claim, or be content with something else than punishment?

There are two very dissimilar theories which answer these questions in precisely the same manner, namely, that justice, in all cases of sin, necessitates punishment—is inexorable, unappeasable.

The first we shall examine is put forth by a school of Universalists. It holds that pardon is an unknown and impossible fact; that law and penalty are so reciprocal that the violation contains the punishment, as cause contains effect—that they are absolutely inseparable; that in the moral, precisely as in the natural, the law carries its retributions with it, which can no more be arrested or turned aside than the burn, when the

hand is inserted in the blaze—strangulation, when the body is submerged in water. They deny permanent or perpetual penalty as cruel and unmeaning, but hold that it will always remain until it has exhausted itself; it will never be lifted or remitted. Each sin has its exact retribution, which follows it as the shadow the substance; but as the sin is limited so the punishment is, and will end as a term of imprisonment does. The sinner may emerge from punishment, but not until it has had its last farthing. It is as when a man lacerates himself—the act of laceration is the sin, the laceration is the punishment, which terminates when the wound heals. Some who entertain this theory of punishment suppose that all sin is punished during this life. Others suppose that some punishments will extend into the next world, and may indefinitely be extended by the continuance of sin, but ultimately the spirit of disobedience must be broken—sin cannot longer maintain the fruitless struggle against law, and the last sin and punishment will expire together, and so evil will disappear from the universe. Those holding this theory do not necessarily ignore Christ as a Saviour. They allow that in a certain sense he saves, not, indeed, from the punishment due to sins already committed, by remission of the penalty, but nevertheless he does save by winning the sinner from his sinful practices, and so stopping the river of his sin stops the river of his possible punishment.

We cannot deny that this is a beautiful philosophy, or, rather, speculation, but we are at a loss to ascertain how it is called a Christian scheme. It certainly is the furthest removed from the teachings of Christ. Its faults are manifold. Claiming to be beneficent, it expunges mercy from the nature of God; claiming to be Christian, it denies both the word and work of Christ; as a philosophy, it is incognizant of some and contradictory of other most important facts; as a theology, it is pagan rather than Christian; it has no place for a distinction between

mistakes and sins, injuries and punishments. Boasting of its salvation, it in fact has neither salvation nor Saviour. Its God is not the God of revelation; its Christ is a travesty of Jesus of Nazareth; as for the Holy Ghost, "it has not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost;" the repentance of which the Bible makes so much is vain, its promised pardon impossible, its new birth a delusion and a snare.

The second is the view held by Calvinists; namely, that all sins are either punished in the person of the transgressor or in the person of Christ, the vicarious substitute of the elect. This theory agrees with the one already examined only in the one point of the inevitability of punishment. We will reserve its examination until we come to discuss theories of the atonement.

Standing over against the idea that every sin must inevitably be punished is the theory that no sin need be punished, that it is matter of mere prerogative with God whether he will punish or pardon, whether he will vindicate law or be indifferent to it. It wholly denies the need of atonement on the one hand or punishment on the other. It may or may not admit the justice of penal sanction to the divine law, but asserts the right in God to vacate such sanctions on mere prerogative; that there is nothing either in his nature or relations to being that obliges him to punish. In the ultimate the theory is equivalent of denying the view that there should be any distinction in the treatment of obedience and disobedience—any difference in the result between sin and holiness. The idea subverts the divine government. Under it God has no law, only advice; maintains no authority, manifests no moral character. If he punish occasionally he becomes capricious, partial, and unjust; if not at all he indicates indifference to ethical distinctions.

He not only surrenders right to obedience, but in the act of abdication of authority declares that he has no ethical nature, that he knows no difference between good and evil, and will

treat them in no different manner; for if he forbear to punish sin on prerogative what distinction is possible between it and holiness? There is no distinction in the treatment, for **that** were punishment, which is denied to exist; the disobedient and obedient to all appearance are regarded alike. There can be no difference in the feeling toward them, or the exact similarity of the treatment is dissimulation, falsehood, hypocrisy, duplicity. To suppose either the possibility that God should feel toward wrong as he does toward right, toward sin as he does toward holiness, or that he should treat one as he does the other in the ultimate, is to asperse his nature, to debase his throne, and remove the only bulwarks from the universe. The idea finally vacates all moral distinctions, reduces holiness and sin to unity, practically if not theoretically, and abolishes the distinction between angels and fiends. By all the reasons we have for supposing God to be holy and to love holiness we are compelled to believe that he must feel, and express in his sovereign action, an eternal hatred against sin, an eternal love of righteousness. His love no less than his justice, his whole ethical nature, protests against the idea that he should be either indifferent or remiss in the punishment of sin; and the entire moral universe, both from nature and interest, joins in the protest, since not to punish the evildoer is a premium on crime; is to leave all being unprotected and a prey. The caprice which gives up punishment in order to vacate hell, while it looks like an amiable compassion, in fact is an atrocious cruelty, which turns the whole universe into a hell and vacates heaven itself. The mercy which lets the culprit go encourages his crime and opens a flood of curse which whelms all beings.

There is a modification of this view which has much more the semblance of truth. It recognizes the justice of punishment and the absolute necessity that it should be exerted in every case of obstinate sin, but supposes repentance a suf-

ficient reason for pardon. The sole office of punishment is to work repentance, and when that is achieved its function ceases, justice demands nothing more, love demands respite. It must be admitted that most of the objections which bear against the former view are obviated by this, but it may not therefore be inferred that it is true. It may be admitted that the whole system of chastisements—semipenal sufferings consequent upon sin during probation—is designed to induce repentance, but it does not follow that repentance is the sole sufficient ground for pardon. It may be a necessary means to an end, and at the same time not be the adequate means, and it does not appear that it is always and under all circumstances effectual.

If by repentance is meant simply regret of an act because of actual or prospective penal suffering on account of it, then repentance must necessarily supervene in every case, since no being likes to suffer, or fails to regret an act which superinduces suffering. The theory, with this definition of repentance, would vacate punishment, not only in some instances, but invariably; in effect it would abrogate or make void all penal sanctions. Under it there would be but a feeble protest, and no protection whatever against sin.

If repentance means something much more radical than this, as a thorough sense of the guilt of sin, a hearty and sincere renunciation of it, a recoil of the sinner's heart against it, deep and honest sorrow for its commission, a longing after pardon and reconciliation to God—a radical reaction of the soul from wrong to right, we are not prepared to say that such a repentance would not secure pardon, nor are we certain that it would under all circumstances; we think it could; but there are grave difficulties in the way of either a positive or negative answer, and the supposition that it would does not by any means show that repentance is the chief ground of pardon, as will appear on reflection.

Those who assert that it would not, among whom are all our standards, take the ground chiefly because the idea seems to weaken, if not entirely do away with the need of atonement. In this we think they are mistaken. They answer to it also that the deepest and most thorough repentance does not do away with the fact of the sin and with its desert of punishment; that a life of the most perfect holiness and a heart of the purest love do not obliterate the fact of a misdeed; that the justice which claims perfect obedience cannot be defrauded of its claim by an imperfect obedience, supplemented with sorrow, however deep, and reformation, however thorough; that the one sin must be answered for according to the letter of the law. Most of these allegations are indubitable; but of some of them we confess doubt. That the ends of justice would necessarily be defrauded in such a case we are not clear, nor are we clear that they would not. The only ends of justice are the security of rights and the good of being, and the manifestation of the divine nature toward sin—the punishment of sin, or the remission of punishment, must be subordinate to these ends. What might be possible is known only to the Infinite.

There is a view of justice much more rigorous than this, which holds that its demand is penalty, that it considers nothing but its claim to suffering. We reject it.

Nothing is plainer than that he will forego suffering, will pardon—remit punishment—and this without wrong to justice; and the condition is repentance and faith in an atonement. We shall see what that atonement is by and by.

No man knows that sin can be forgiven without the atonement. And no man knows that if a true repentance were possible without an atonement sin might not be pardoned. What is recorded is that there is an atonement, without which there is no forgiveness, but through which there is forgiveness to the penitent and believing. How the atonement satisfies the claim

of justice otherwise than by working repentance in the hearts of men has been a matter of much perplexing discussion; but that it does become effective by working repentance, and in a way that is contentful to justice, will appear in the progress of the discussion.

The real answer, as we think, in the above case—the case supposed—is one which neither exists nor can exist without the intervention of help, and that help comes, in fact, only through an atonement. Whether it might have come in another way we are not informed. We are distinctly informed that sin cuts off the soul from the fountain of all spiritual life and leaves it dead, and so leaves it helpless in itself, and that help comes to it only because of and through the atonement. This is enough. We have neither right nor competency to determine what might have been. It is revealed to us that through the atonement we may repent, and if we repent we shall be pardoned. This is God's method of saving men from the power and punishment of sin.

In attempting a solution of the problem of pardon under the divine government a careful discrimination must be made between the two departments of natural and moral government—departments extremely distinct, but only intimately connected and inseparably interblended. Examination will show that while in the one there is possibility neither of sin nor pardon, in the other there is room for both. The failure to make the distinction has greatly confused the thinking of many wise and generally sound investigators.

The department of nature is carried forward by the operation of certain definite, invariable, and necessitating forces acting in accordance with these laws. They are the appointment of God; but, except in the case of providential intervention, are never interfered with—they stand fast forever. If one of these laws be transgressed an answering retributive blow immediately

follows, and inevitably. These effects are called punishments; but the least reflection will show that in many cases the word implies nothing of the nature of moral retribution—has nothing of the nature of punishment for moral fault, since the blow follows unintended and accidental transgression precisely in the same manner as willful violation. The laws reigning in and over nature know no moral distinctions—go forward to their end wholly irrespective of moral causes. It is a government administered wholly irrespective of moral exigencies. Under it precisely the same thing happens to the evil and the good. Its “sun rises alike upon the just and the unjust;” its earthquakes and storms and pestilences ravage alike the habitations of the righteous and the wicked—except in extraordinary cases which occasionally arise along the ages for great moral purposes. It knows nothing of pardon. Its blow inexorably falls alike upon the evil and the good, the penitent and the obdurate.

It includes moral beings, but is not administered over them as moral, but only so far as they exist in the plane of the natural, and in that plane it considers no moral questions; for there are none. Every moral being belongs also to the department of nature, and exists within the sphere of natural law so far forth as he is invested with a nature. If, as a nature, he comes into collision with natural law, he comes under its effects, and they are not suspended or modified because of his exalted moral worth. And when *morally* he violates a natural law, as when he knowingly sins as to his nature or any other nature, the natural effect will inevitably follow, even after the sin as to its proper punishment is forgiven; thus showing that the effect which follows in the nature is not properly penal, though a sin was committed. The same act against nature which in one would be sin, because a known and willful violation of a natural law, would not be sin in another who did not

know or feel the obligation of the law. The natural deed would be the same in both cases, but the moral deed would not be the same. But in both cases precisely the same natural effects would follow, showing that the effect is not moral retribution, but merely effect under natural law.

But there is a moral department in which retributive forces operate wholly along moral lines, and whose movements are determined wholly by moral causes, and never spring from natural causes. The retributive blow is evoked by the criminal action of a will and emanates from the direct action of an avenging will, and not from a natural law. Here the retribution is purely moral and penal in its cause and source. Let us see how this is and that it is.

A moral being is one who knows his law, and in knowing it knows himself to be free in regard to its obedience or disobedience, and who for some cause feels himself to be under obligation to keep it.

As natural and as moral two classes of effect may follow—effects natural and moral. He exists under the two laws, and often these are both operative in the same act, or resultant of the same act. Let us illustrate: The law of his nature requires that he should be temperate in his habits, the moral law makes the same requisition. If he shall violate this law, ignorantly or knowingly, one no more than the other, the effect in his nature must inevitably follow—loss of health, impaired power, premature death. These are nature's consequences, administered by the inevitable operation of necessary forces. But suppose the violation to have been knowingly perpetrated in resistance to the demand of conscience and of God, now there arises another and altogether different fact—a fact of guilt, ill desert, not known to natural law, but wholly within the sphere of the moral—a fact which calls forth, not simply impaired health, etc., but the displeasure of God, and adds the sense of this as spe-

cific punishment for the fault of will or for the moral fault. This fact of the displeasure of God with the act as criminal transgression was not at all expressed in the effects produced in the natural plane, since, as we have seen, those effects transpire whether there has been moral fault or not; but this fact of displeasure is possible only where there has been moral fault, and has regard only to that. The evil to the nature resulted from the physical act of intemperance, and nature is the avenger in her own realm. The deeper evil that is in the will transgresses a higher law, and God is the avenger by direct punishment—a punishment which is only possible when there is such a fault of will, and which he declares consists in personal banishment of the transgressor from his presence, or consignment to remorse and anguish.

The sin act consists in the willful disobedience of the moral law, but as the moral law enjoins the observance voluntarily of the natural law the sin act violates also the natural law. The natural law was ordered for the good of being, and when observed the good of being is subserved, and this is so whether the observance be voluntary or involuntary, and *vice versâ*, the infraction harms the good of being, and so whether voluntary or involuntary.

Its observance is enjoined, therefore, as moral duty. To neglect the injunction is sin, and the effect is harm, and it was to prevent the effect that the injunction was made; herein is the reason of the law to prevent harm. Now, the evil which the law prohibits is not the punishment which is enacted to prevent its violation; for that there is another punishment superadded by the lawgiver; let no one imagine, therefore, that the natural effects of sin, which denote the evil it is in itself, are the same as its judicial punishment.

When a sin has been conceived in the mind it becomes subject to the treatment of law. The law, laying its imperative on

the will in its inmost momenta is violated in the intent to violate its commands. The intent is violation, is injury of the rights of sovereignty, and is injury of the moral nature of the subject—is sin against its law. It harms the person from within, marring his purity, and it evokes harm from without, calling forth retribution. When sin has been translated into action against law it effects harm objectively, for, so far as it is external act, it hurts the person or other beings; it is hurt and can never cease to have been hurt; no power can annihilate that fact; but that hurt, whether subjective or objective, whether of the sinner himself or other being, is no part of the proper punishment of sin; but it is that in part, if not in whole, for which the punishment is due, is of the substance of the wrong if not the entirety of it—that to prevent which punishment was instituted. This will explain why it is that sufferings here in this life are not punishment, and why it is that where sin is pardoned the sufferings which they occasion do not cease. The pardoned drunkard does not recover his health or avert the death his dissipation has superinduced; they remain after his punishment has been remitted. The evil effects of objective sin are in nature and inevitable—they are operated by natural law and cannot be averted; they are for reformatory uses: showing sin to be an evil, but there is a much more serious evil threatened, but delayed.

The physical evil and moral wretchedness which follow upon our sinful conduct, but really as consequent to our constitution and relations, are not strictly of the nature of punishment, though such is a very common view. That sin brings misery is in the order of the divine constitution of things. It is not clear that there could be such a constitution of moral beings that suffering would not follow upon sin. Indeed, the contrary is manifest. But what so follows as a natural result, though in an order of things divinely constituted, is not strictly penal.

Such naturally consequent evil may have in the divine plan an important ministry in the economy of moral government. But punishment strictly is a divine infliction of penalty upon sin in the order of a judicial administration.

Following all the evils that sin inflicts, both upon the sinner himself and upon the good of other beings, is the judgment, when he must give account of these—when their evil will appear and when his punishment proper will begin. The degradation and shame and sorrows of sin accompanying its performance, so far from having been its punishment proper, will be in part the very things which will be to be punished. This is the uniform teaching of the Scriptures, which locate punishment beyond the judgment and in eternity—it is banishment from God and the misery of personal remorse. It is not a suffering included in nature, inflicted by the operation of natural law; but is a suffering emanating from eternal sovereignty for a fault of will—for essential wickedness—committed during probation and never repented of. Rebukes of conscience and the distresses which flow into the consciousness sequent upon sin, like physical suffering during probation, must be included among premonitory chidings whose end is reform rather than judicial inflictions. They hint what punishment will be; a great element of their poignancy is their keenness of warning, their apprehension of certain and coming doom. Nothing is more conspicuous in consciousness than the feeling that punishment is something awaiting us in the future or beyond death. The ominous finger keeps ever pointing to that mysterious realm, and the secret voice is “not now but forever.” We are kept constantly aware that we must face our deeds, secret and public—that an inquest will come—that justice will hold the balance, and that a dreadful blow will follow crime. Revelation joins conscience and thunders the warning on every page—tells us of longsuffering patience now, but of terrible retribution after a while. One’s

blood almost curdles when he reads the dreadful precursive words, "Then shall the Son of man sit upon the throne of his glory," with the graphic delineation of a final judgment found in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew's gospel. It may be ventured that there is no single fact more universally and unintermittingly characteristic of human consciousness than this spontaneous feeling of accountability following this life. The grave acquires its terrors almost wholly from this apprehension. Few are restrained from deeds of evil from any fear of consequences that are limited to this life, where the temptation is strong and opportunities of concealment supposed to be good. But all, unless utterly blinded and hardened, dread that inward monitor, "Yet thou shalt answer." Conscience reechoes and gives emphasis to the appalling words. Through the open grave the inward eye beholds approaching vengeance. It is in vain that we attempt to lay the frightful apparition—we cannot. Nor is it a horror of uncertainty as to what the retribution will be. Much is hidden; but one thing is plain—it looms upon us like a pharos from some far-off dismal shore; we behold it, a signal of warning; it tells of danger, of a storm of wrath which awaits us, a punishment that will burst upon us in fury, darkening and desolating our immortality. Such is the doctrine of punishment disclosed in human consciousness when unperverted, and such is the doctrine found in the sacred page. "The wages of sin is death"—separation from the loving presence and fellowship of God. The tribunal at which answer is to be made, and from which sentence is to be pronounced, and retributive penalties to be executed, we locate beyond mundane time. There can be no reasonable doubt that this harmony of the divine teachings in the book of his revelations and in the constitution of his moral creature point to a fact. That fact is that the present life is a probationary period, in which there are premonitory reproofs designed to convert and cure our

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tendencies to evil, and that final account awaits us, when due punishment will be inflicted.

Now, the question is, May these penalties be averted, or will moral law go to its mark even as natural law does? We have seen that natural law is inexorable; that it admits of no excuse; that it never for any reason turns aside from its mark; that the transgression and its evil effect are eternally united—the one concomitant of the other; the flame must burn, the ponderous wheel grind to powder whatever comes in its way; that here forgiveness is absolutely unknown. Is it so in the moral as well? Some so teach. Surely the Scriptures are filled with the contrary idea. If there is anything made plain it is that, while moral fault is the greatest of all, in fact, the only, and while possible consequences here are the most grave and tremendous, involving the entire being in curse and ruin for eternity, yet that there is a possibility of pardon—not a pardon that will annul the natural effects of sin, but a pardon that will bring to an end the moral effects. God, in the administration of the moral, will forgive; in the administration of nature he will not. There is a reason for the difference—why nature will not relent. We do not forget that God is the author of nature—that nature is but a mode of his operation. We mean, therefore, only this, that there is a reason why God in nature is uniform; why he does not turn back upon himself to interfere with the established order; to prevent evil resulting from it would be to annul established order. To suspend gravitation whenever it would hurt, or any other agency whenever it might harm, would be to take away the quality of uniformity, or, in effect, abolish an order of nature entirely. The benefits of an established and permanent order are too obvious to need defense.

It is essentially important to a morally responsible being that he should be in a system whose order is permanent, that he

may be able to know with certainty what will be the effects of his conduct; that he may thus know the importance of obedience to law; in no other way can he do this. He must learn the good of obedience by feeling and seeing the evil of disobedience. He must have assured data upon which to proceed. If nature turned aside at every whim of his he could have no certainty of moral distinctions. There would be no difference between wisdom and folly, justice and injustice, truth and falsehood. Nature gives emphasis to them. By thus being able to know the effects of his conduct because of the permanence of the laws that determine them he is enabled to know what is good and what is evil, what will harm and what will benefit, and, therefore, to feel the imperative of moral law when it commands the good. Thus, too, he is enabled to see the good and evil in himself—to feel the sense of approval when he chooses the good, and the sense of guilt when he chooses the evil, and to understand the justice of punishment when he transgresses law. How else could he possess a moral character? That is, a character for which he is responsible, a personal character.

For these will acts, which make him an agent subordinating known and uniform forces with freedom and with a knowledge of the result, he is held to account. They visibly determine whether he is good or evil, and determine how a just and beneficent sovereign shall regard and treat him.

Is there the same reason for invariability of result in the moral department? When guilt has accrued by breach of law must the effect follow here as there? So we would conclude; but we see in fact that there is a difference in several respects. First, the effect does not, as in the former case, immediately follow, and never obviously, in fact, follow during this life. This difference is sufficient to give rise to the supposition that possibly the principle of the administration may be different; since the penalty is not an inseparable concomitant of the offense

gives rise to the idea that it may possibly not occur at all or be in some way averted. What is thus suggested as possible we find the Scriptures abundantly teach is actual, in that they show that the moral penalty of sin may be remitted even when the *natural effect* is not prevented; in other words, the sin itself may be pardoned, its proper penalty restrained, though its temporary evils may not be hindered.

Nor does this imply any more uncertainty or looseness in the administration of moral than natural law. It supposes a different principle, but not a less fixed and inexorable end. In the natural realm, effects immediately and inevitably follow their causes. In the moral realm the effect of the divine displeasure immediately and inevitably follows sin; but the final penal blow that results from the displeasure is suspended until judgment or until probation is ended; and it is a fixed principle of the administration that during that interval, for reasons which will appear further on, on certain defined conditions, the suspended penalty may be averted—may never transpire; and yet the validity and authority of moral law not be surrendered. The principle demonstrates that moral law is not administered mechanically, as natural law is, and the reason of the difference is found in the essential difference of the subjects; nor does the difference imply anything of indeterminateness or looseness or uncertainty in the law or administration. In the first case the lawgiver finds no sufficient reason for variability or delay—sees it best that effects should immediately and uniformly follow their causes without interference under most circumstances; in the other case he sees that gravest interests would be subserved by the enactment of laws the administration of whose penalties should not be mechanical or corporate and immediate, but should be delayed, and on certain conditions be relaxed or remitted entirely—he determining what the conditions shall be. They *must* be such, however, as will not dis-

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honor his character by connivance at disobedience; such as will not imply indifference to the sanctity of law; such as will not undermine the authority of his government; such as will not peril the rights or interests of any of his creatures; such as will be in consonance with highest wisdom, love, and justice, and such as will subserve the best interests of his universe. If such conditions may exist he may extend pardon. That such conditions do exist is one proof, in that he publishes to his human children that he will "forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin." What the principles of mercy are, and what the grounds, will appear as we advance.

Growing out of the universal consciousness of sin and the ineradicable belief that sin deserves punishment, and the apprehension of danger which conscience keeps alive in every human breast, and the feeling of need of pardon and reconciliation with God—a feeling which is either permanent or occasional with every human being, and the abiding sense of helplessness which we find within us, the question is as old as man and as widespread, "What must I do to be saved?" It is impossible to escape it. Only the most abandoned can make light of it. Their levity is at once the fruit of their extreme moral debasement and the proof of their imminent peril. That there should be honest difference in the answer is not surprising.

The Scriptures undertake to answer the question. In them Christ is set forth as the Saviour of men. Some on one ground and some on another decline to accept the answer. Among those who admit the authority of the revelation there emerges a difference of understanding as to what the teaching is. They do not differ so much as to the fact that Christ is therein set forth as a Saviour, or as to the fact that he is in some true sense a Saviour, as upon the question in what sense he saves and how he saves.

There are many theories if we make each slight difference de-

note a theory. If we group under one theory all these varieties which have a fundamental unity, there are but three, one of which takes the name of the moral influence theory; the other two the common name of atonement theories, which are respectively called the satisfaction and the governmental theories. Under some one of these three all theories which in any way ascribe salvation to Christ may be classed.

Dr. Miley says, after a very careful analysis, and we think he is correct, "In a strict and scientific sense there are but two theories of atonement. We have seen how many in popular enumeration are reducible to the one theory of moral influence. Others are so void of essential facts that they hold no rightful place as theories. Nor is the scheme of moral influence in any strict sense a theory of atonement, because it neither answers to the real necessity in the case nor admits an objective ground of forgiveness in the mediation of Christ.

"Nor can there be more than two theories. This limitation is determined by the law of necessary difference between the necessity for an atonement and the nature of the atonement for answering to that necessity. This fact we have, that the vicarious sufferings of Christ are an objective ground of the divine forgiveness. There is a necessity for such a ground. His sufferings are an atonement only as they answer to this necessity. Hence the nature of the atonement is determined by the nature of its necessity. Now, this necessity must be either (1) in the requirements of an *absolute justice* which must punish sin, or (2) in the rectoral office of justice as an obligation to conserve the interests of moral government. There can be no other necessity for an atonement as an objective ground of forgiveness. Nor does any scheme of a real atonement in Christ either represent or imply another. Thus there is room for two theories, but only two. There is place for a theory of absolute substitution, according to which the re-

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redemptive sufferings of Christ were strictly penal, and the fulfillment of an absolute obligation of justice in the punishment of sin. This is the theory of satisfaction, and answers to a necessity in the first sense given. There is also place for a theory of conditional substitution, according to which the redemptive sufferings of Christ were not the punishment of sin, but such a substitute for the rectoral office of penalty as renders forgiveness, on proper conditions, consistent with the requirements of moral government. This answers to a necessity in the second sense given, and accords with the deeper principles of the governmental theory. The truth of atonement must be with the one or the other of these theories." *

We shall best systematize the discussion by *first* giving attention to the *moral influence* theory. Strictly speaking this is not a theory of atonement. It is rather an account of how men become reconciled to God in a manner, through Christ, which sets aside his atonement work. But because it is a theory of reconciliation and salvation by means of certain influences which flow from Christ it has generally been ranked as a theory of atonement.

The theory is held by theologians and semitheologians and moralists of such views on correlated points that it will be difficult to make a statement which would be acceptable to the entire class. There is extreme difference among them as to the nature of sin; how it affects the soul, the question of regeneration, the person of Christ, the authority of revelation, and, indeed, the entire circle of fundamental theological ideas—some occupying the lowest plane of Socinianism and others embracing many of the essentials of high orthodoxy. The point of their agreement is thus put by Dr. Miley: "The mediation of Christ fulfills its redemptive offices in the economy of human salvation through the influence of its own lessons

* *Atonement in Christ*, pp. 100, 101.

and motives, as practically operative upon the soul and life of men. Such is the office of his incarnation, if admitted; of his example, teaching, miracles, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension. By the lessons of truth so given and enforced it is sought to enlighten men; to address to them higher motives to a good life; to awaken love in grateful response to the consecration of so worthy a life to their good; to lead them to repentance and piety through the moral force of such a manifestation of the love of God; to furnish them a perfect example in the life of Christ, and through his personal influence to transform them into his likeness." *

Dr. A. A. Hodge thus puts it: "The general view that the great end of the death of Christ was to produce a moral impression upon the hearts of sinners, and thus lead to their moral and spiritual reformation, has been taught in various forms by many successive teachers, and has been uniformly rejected as a heresy by the Church." Hagenbach† says that "Socinus defined the object of Christ's death positively as follows: (1) The death of Christ was an example set before men for their imitation. (2) It was designed to confirm the promises made by God, thus giving assurance of the forgiveness of sins. (3) It was the necessary means, preparatory to his resurrection, by which he entered into glory. 'Christ died that through death he might attain to resurrection, from which arises the strongest confirmation of the divine will and the most certain persuasion of our own resurrection and attainment to eternal life.'" ‡ Thus, according to Socinus, the designed effect of Christ's death is wholly a subjective impression upon the minds of sinners, to stimulate them to emulate his heroic virtue; to prove and to illustrate the love of God and his will-

* *Atonement in Christ*, pp. 121-123; Professor Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ*, pp. 326-328.

† Vol. ii, p. 360.

‡ *Cat. Racov.*, p. 265.

ingness to forgive sin upon the repentance of the sinner; to confirm the truth of all the doctrines he had taught and of the promises which God had made through the prophets or through himself; and by giving opportunity for his resurrection from the dead to demonstrate the fact of a future life and to prove and illustrate the future resurrection of his people. The modern theories of Jowett, Maurice, Bushnell, Young, etc., differ from that of Socinus only in being rhetorical where his is logical, confused where his is clear, and narrow and partial where his is comprehensive. The lines between truth and error with regard to this central doctrine of the Gospel were already definitely drawn in the first half of the twelfth century, at the very opening of the Scholastic era. As to the entire essence of the doctrine, Anselm then stood precisely where the whole Church of Christ in all its branches has ever since stood; and the famous Abelard taught in every essential respect the doctrine maintained by Socinus, and by Maurice, Bushnell, and Young, in our own day. Baur, as quoted by Hagenbach,* says: "Thus the two representatives of Scholasticism in its first period, when it developed itself in all its youthful vigor, Anselm and Abelard, were directly opposed to each other with respect to the doctrines of redemption and atonement. The one considered the last ground of it to be the divine justice, requiring an infinite equivalent for the infinite guilt of sin; that is, a necessity founded in the nature of God. The other held it to be the free grace of God, which, by kindling love in the breast of man, blots out sin, and with sin its guilt."

To the same effect Bushnell says: "The true and simple account of his [Christ's] sufferings is that he had such a heart as would not suffer him to be turned away from us, and that he suffered for us even as love must willingly suffer for its enemy."† "Vicarious sacrifice was in no way peculiar to

* Vol. ii, pp. 47, 48.

† *Vicarious Sacrifice*, p. 108.

Christ save in degree." * "The Holy Spirit works in love, as Christ did, and suffers all the incidents of love—compassion, wounded feeling, sorrow, concern, burdened sympathy, violated patience—taking men upon him, to bear them and their sins, precisely as Christ himself did in his sacrifice." † He "simply came into the corporate state of evil [sum total of natural consequences of sin], and bore it with us—faithful unto death for our recovery." ‡ He "came simply to be the manifested love of God." § "Christ became incarnate to obtain moral power" (that which belongs to a developed character). "The understanding is to obtain through him, and the facts and processes of his life, a new kind of power, namely, moral power—the same that is obtained by human conduct under human methods. It will be divine power still, only it will not be attribute power. That is the power of his idea [that is, original power, intrinsic to the divine nature]. This new power is to be the power culminative, gained by him among men as truly as they gain it with each other. Only it will turn out in the end to be the grandest, closest to feeling, most impressive, most soul-renovating, and spiritually sublime power that was ever obtained in this or any other world." ||

To the same effect, also, Young writes over and over again in many passages exquisitely beautiful, and true also when accepted as an expression of one side of the truth—an inestimably precious side too: "The infinite Father in boundless pity looked down upon his undutiful children, and yearned to rescue them by regaining their hearts and drawing them back to allegiance and to peace. With Godlike mercy he unveiled all that was possible of divine purity, and truth, and beauty, and sweetness, and lovingness, and compassion. He humbled himself, descended to the level of his creatures, walked among

* *Vicarious Sacrifice*, p. 107.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

† *Ibid.*, p. 74.

|| *Ibid.*, p. 18.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 514.

them, spoke to them face to face, and appealed, as he still continues to appeal, to their hearts through the gentleness, the tenderness, the wisdom, the meekness, the patience, the sufferings, the tears, the blood, and the death of Jesus Christ.

“The distinction here is radical and fundamental. The sacrifice was not offered up by men at all or by a substitute in their room; and it was not required to appease God’s anger, or to satisfy his justice, or to render him propitious. The sacrifice was not offered by men and for sin, in order that sin might be forever put down and rooted out of human nature. This stupendous act of divine sacrifice was God’s instrument of reconciliation and redemption, God’s method of conquering the human heart and of subduing a revolted world and attaching it to his throne—pure love, self-sacrificing love, crucified, dying love.”

This theory has much truth in it, and much greatly neglected truth. It presents a view of the case which is both important and greatly obscured in the generally prevailing expositions of the subject. But it is certainly a defective view. It presents only one class of the requirements of the case. It provides for a part of the difficulties in the way of man’s deliverance from sin, but wholly ignores another part. It shows how the work of Christ is related to man, but utterly denies its relations to God. It is a mode of saving from sinning, but not from guilt of sins. It knows nothing of pardon. It denies that there is any impediment in God’s nature or government to his favorable treatment of the sinner if he will but cease sinning. Christ’s only work is to reconcile the sinner to God, not God to the sinner. The propitiation is of the sinner, not of resenting holiness. Calvary pleads with man, not with God.

This defective view finds its great power in the highly exaggerated and utterly impossible implications of the penal atonement theory. It dwells on these, and makes them appear,

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as they really are, a revolting travesty of the divine character, and by a natural law of mind as well as matter rebounds to the opposite extreme. The theory it rejects locates the conspicuous if not all the impediments on God's side, and so renders the atonement a method of placating God—a plan by which to extinguish his wrath and render him willing to exert his abundant power to save some or many or all. This it regards, and justly so, as slanderous against his character, and in direct contradiction of his word. The device by which the placation is effected, the transfer of punishment which his wrath demands to his own innocent Son, it sees to be mere cruelty and high crime, and spurns it as atrocious. Stung with resentment, it flies to the opposite extreme, and locates *all* the impediments in the sinner himself, and sees in the atonement no other function than to remove these, and so exhausts its office in its subjective effects on the sinner's mind. It is called the moral influence theory. There is a bar to salvation which it does not bring into the view, namely, the bar of public justice. If the sinner is saved it must be on grounds which will make his salvation not at the sacrifice of justice. A ground must exist for it of sufficient merit to make it right, conservative of public welfare to forgive. It is doubtful whether an agency which will confine itself exclusively to reform will do that. If it would be effectual in some cases it might weaken the impression of the evil of sin and impair the sacredness of law over wide surfaces of mind. This the guardian of public welfare could not do without injustice. It partakes of the same fault, but in a much less degree, which was found to mar the theories of optional forgiveness and forgiveness upon the assurance of repentance; but it is much more supposable than the theory of which it is a rebound. Mere reform under a just government is not ground for pardon, however superinduced. There are other parties interested and other rights to be considered be-

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sides the administration and culprit subject, and righteousness must respect those as much as these. It is not a mere question what sympathy for the criminal will dictate or what love in the sovereign will prompt. There is a question of justice which cannot be set aside. Love in its deepest *momenta* includes it.

Arising in a system of theology so diverse from the orthodox faith, and so antagonistic itself to the orthodox atonement, it was inevitably polemic, and both defensively and offensively in its methods. This naturally arose, in the first part, from the fact that the Scriptures, in what seems their obvious sense, positively affirm an objective atonement in Christ; and the second part, from the fact that the doctrine of atonement then most prevalent was open to serious valid objections, and especially to very plausible ones.

But little attempt was made to build up the new doctrine on direct scriptural proofs. The main attempt was to set aside the Scripture truth alleged in support of the Church doctrine. In its endeavor the new exegesis had little regard for well-established laws of hermeneutics. It dealt freely in captious criticism, and in the most gratuitous and forced interpretations. The exigency of the case required such a method. Scripture facts and utterances are so clear and emphatic in the affirmation of an objective atonement in the mediation of Christ as the only and necessary ground of forgiveness that the new scheme found in such a method its only possible defense against the crushing force.

Within the sphere of reason the new scheme was boldly offensive in its method. Here it had more apparent strength, and could be plausible even when not really potent. But any real strength bore rather against a particular form of redemptive doctrine than against the truth itself. The array of objections, wrought in all the vigor of rhetoric and passion, is nugatory against the true doctrine.

Beyond the ground of valid objection to the doctrine of satisfaction Socinianism finds a sphere of plausible objection to the atonement itself. A fluency of words, even with little wealth or potency of thought, will easily declaim against its unreason, its injustice, its aspersion of the divine goodness, its implications of vindictiveness in God, its subversion of moral distinctions and obligations. Very gifted minds have given to such declamation all possible force. It has the force of plausibility in false assumptions and issues, but is impotent in the light of truth.*

The ground of rejecting this theory is, not that it has no truth in it, but that it is a fractional and distorted truth allied with a fundamental and dangerous error. It is true that the atonement is a scheme of love—that a large part of its efficaciousness in saving men is the influence of the teachings of Jesus, and of his life of self-sacrifice drawing them away from their sins. His doctrines, his pure and beautiful precepts, his spotless example, his heroism, his moral elevation, his transcendence in every respect, his unexampled love for humanity, his brave defense of the truth, his courage even unto death, the detestation kindled against his enemies, the indefinable feeling that somehow he was superhuman, his gentleness, his poverty, his identification with the lowly, his manger at the beginning and his cross at the end of his earthly life—these things have gone into the heart of the world, and have moved and do move it with strange and mysterious power. It is true that souls attracted solely by the charm of this wonderful life to humble penitence and faith would be saved. It is true that to this very end, to draw men unto him, Christ came into the world; that it is thus that he saves. It is no wonder that, feeling the power of this great truth, and shocked at the travesty of God contained in the prevailing creed, men were ready

* *Atonement in Christ*, pp. 123-125.

to accept this as the true theory of atonement. It was and is in these respects less objectionable than that which it rejected. But, after all, it was but half a truth, and for that reason must be rejected as a theory of the atonement. It utterly ignores essential truths of the system. It is false in its negations to the general tenor of revelation; false especially to all the particular terms, emptying them of their meaning; false generally to the doctrine of sin; false, as a rule, in its Christology; false in its entire view of the nature and necessity of the atonement. Specifically: (a) It gives no adequate view of justice in the punishment of sin. (b) It fails to grasp the significance of the death of Christ as an objective ground of atonement, doing away with its necessity as a ground of forgiveness and reducing it to simple martyrdom. (c) It robs him of his exclusive rank as Saviour, and makes him but one of many saviours. (d) It necessarily retires a large part of revelation, or so explains it as to do violence to all just rules of interpretation. (e) It is a philosophy rather than a scriptural theology in a case in which revelation alone is competent to speak. The result is that its tendency is unfavorable to faith, and the truth that is in it, by reason of negations and positive errors, is deprived of practical power. These are grave charges, but such as no one can doubt who has studied the theory and noted its working.

It ought to be said, also, that the half truth that is in it, and which it claims as peculiarly its own, is in no other sense peculiar to it but in this, that in it the fragment is taken for the whole. The true scriptural theory of atonement includes all that is true and valuable in it, and adds those other rejected, but essential truths, without which all virtue would go out of the very truths which the imperfect theory contains.

But if, as we have seen, there are penalties against sin, and if there is reason to believe that they cannot be remitted on mere prerogatives without impairing the integrity of the divine

government, and, indeed, without a total abdication of his ethical nature, and all moral distinctions; and, if for the same and additional reasons they cannot be remitted on the ground of any repentance or reformation the transgressor may effect in himself; and, if any moral influences which may be exerted on him helpful to his repentance and reformation must be ineffectual to constitute an adequate ground of forgiveness; if, in fact, there are hindrances, in either the nature of God or his rectoral relations, which must be removed out of the way before he can extend pardon to the guilty; and, if the Bible makes constant reference to a redeeming scheme meeting these needs, and setting forth the grounds and conditions of pardon—if there is a Saviour and salvation, it becomes a most important question: What is that redeeming scheme, and what are the conditions of that salvation?

It may not, indeed, be important to know the philosophy of it; possibly there are mysteries in it we cannot fully comprehend; but some things we need to know, and some things seem to be plainly revealed. There is a scheme of salvation set up in the Scriptures. No one can become acquainted with the sacred writings without discovering this. It is also clear that to become actual partakers of the benefits of that scheme we need to know some of its cardinal facts and doctrines.

If it were an arrangement whereby salvation was procured for us irrespective of any coaction of ours—salvation here or hereafter; something which God has done, or is to do, which will ultimately bring us out all right; if it had no relation to our lives now, or relations of self-working processes; if we were simply in some way to become recipients of it by some kind of irresistible and sovereign grace, without reference to our thinking or seeking, it might not then be important that we should be concerned to know anything about it, or we might be indifferent whether this or that theory is true; but

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if, on the contrary, it has been revealed because it is important for us to have certain information about it; if there are certain facts in it which are to have great practical influence on our conduct as well as thinking; and if the salvation it brings is conditional on our acceptance of it, then, indeed, it becomes important that we should in some measure understand it. If especially it is to be a practical power in the world, and the measure of its power depends upon a right understanding of it—if, as a truth, it is to influence and guide men—if it is to build on the earth a divine kingdom by the force of its ideas, then more than ever we need to know what it is.

It is not something that we are to excogitate from our inner consciousness; it is not a human philosophy, it is a revelation. It is God's scheme for saving men. It is a divine plan for bringing men back to himself. It is a way whereby pardon may be *offered* to the guilty, whereby the depraved may be restored to holiness, whereby the kingdom of God may be set up in the earth, whereby sinners, even the whole race, may attain to everlasting life—the atonement, the redemption, the reconciliation—the salvation through Jesus Christ.

The fact that the Scriptures do constantly teach that men may be saved from both the guilt and punishment of sin, and that they as constantly represent that they are saved, if at all, by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, is accepted by all the theories we are about to examine.

They differ, not as to the fact, but as to the theory—the grounds and mode. If the matters in which they agree are important, the matters in which they disagree are also of great importance.

The first theory in the order in which we prepare to treat these is known as the penal atonement or satisfaction theory.

It rests upon the assumption or postulate that the law claims of punishment must be satisfied in atonement—that

punishment when due must be inflicted, and that, therefore, Christ, in becoming the Redeemer of men from the pollution and guilt of their sins, suffered the very penalty of the law which was due them, and thus satisfied the penal demands of justice. But as the law demands perpetual and perfect obedience the theory consistently holds yet further, not simply that he suffered the identical penalty due the sins of his people, but he also rendered a perfect obedience to the entire law claim upon them, and thus completely satisfied or extinguished the entire demands of justice in their case. The atonement is thus a complete satisfaction to all the claims of justice.

That we may not seem to do injustice to the theory by what might be considered a partisan statement or a forced construction, we will give here a full and carefully prepared statement of one of its most accredited and distinguished expounders. This we do in preference to scrap quotations, which, taken apart from their connections, often do injustice to authors.

Dr. A. A. Hodge says:

“The orthodox doctrine provides exhaustively for satisfying all these conditions of redemption at once by the one act of the Lord Jesus, in vicariously suffering the penalty of the broken law as the substitute of his people. His motive was infinite love. The precise thing he did was to suffer the penalty of the law as the substitute of his people. His direct intention was to satisfy justice in their behalf, and thus secure, on legal terms, their salvation. In doing this he also necessarily satisfied the natural demand of the sinner’s conscience for expiation, and subdued his sullen alienation, and removed his distrust of God, by the supreme exhibition of divine love made on the cross. At the same time, and by the same means, he gave to the whole moral universe the highest conceivable demonstration of God’s inexorable determination to punish all sin, just be-

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cause he did so punish it even in the person of his Son. Prompted by the infinite love common to the Father and himself, he voluntarily assumed all of our legal responsibilities. He obeyed and suffered as our substitute. His sufferings were vicarious. It *expiated* the guilt of sin. It fulfilled the demands of law. It propitiated justice. It reconciled us to God. It *actually secures our salvation*, and does not simply put us in a salvable state. According to the terms of the covenant of grace the impetration of redemption by Christ is infallibly connected with its application by the Holy Ghost. Not being the payment of a pecuniary debt, which *ipso facto* liberates, but a vicarious penal satisfaction, it remains, as far as we are concerned, as a matter of right, in the hands of God to grant its benefits to whom he pleases, when and on whatsoever terms he pleases. His granting it in any case is an act of sovereign grace. But since Christ acted by covenant, he has acquired by his performance of the stipulated conditions a strictly legal title to the salvation of all for whom he acted. As between God and the Mediator, the claim in right is perfect. As between God and the Mediator and sinful man, it is all free and amazing grace. Being the actual execution in strict rigor of justice of the unrelaxed penalty of the law in the person of the God-man, it is the most impressive exhibition to the moral universe conceivable of God's inexorable determination to punish all sin.

"The word 'satisfaction' is neither ambiguous nor defective. The Reformed Churches mean by its use that Christ fully satisfied all that the justice and law of God required on the part of mankind as the condition of their being admitted to divine favor and eternal happiness. As the demands of the law upon sinful men are both preceptive and penal—the condition of life being 'do this and live,' while the penalty denounced upon disobedience is, 'the soul that sinneth, it shall die'—it follows that any work which shall fully satisfy the demands of the divine

law in behalf of men must include that obedience which the law demands as the condition of life, and that suffering which it demands as the penalty of sin.

“ *The difference between a penal and a pecuniary satisfaction.* These differ precisely as do crime and debt, things and persons, and therefore the distinction is both obvious and important. Many, who either are incapable of understanding the question, are ignorant of its history, or who are unscrupulous as to the manner in which they conduct controversy, are continually charging our doctrine with the folly of representing the sacrifice of Christ as a purely commercial transaction, in which so much was given for so much, and in which God was in such a sense recompensed for his favors to us that, however much gratitude we may owe to Christ, we owe on this behalf none to God. Long ago the doctrine of the Reformed Churches was unanswerably vindicated from such puerile charges by all its most authoritative expounders. ‘Here the twofold solution, concerning which *jurists* treat, should be accurately distinguished. The one which *ipso facto* liberates the debtor or criminal because that very thing which was owed is paid, whether it was done by the debtor or by another in his name. The other, which *ipso facto* does *not* liberate, since not at all the very thing which was owed, but an equivalent, is paid, which, although it does not thoroughly and *ipso facto* discharge the obligation, yet having been accepted—since it might have been refused—is regarded as a satisfaction. This distinction holds between a pecuniary and a penal indebtedness. For in a pecuniary debt the payment of the thing owed *ipso facto* liberates the debtor from all obligations whatsoever, because here the point is not *who pays*, but *what is paid*. Hence the creditor, the payment being accepted, is never said to extend toward the debtor any indulgence or remission, because he has received all that was owed him. But the case is different with respect to a penal debt, because in

this case the obligation respects the person as well as the thing; the demand is upon the *person who pays* as well as the *thing paid*; that is, that the penalty should be *suffered by the person sinning*; for as the law demands personal and proper obedience, so it exacts *personal enduring of the penalty*. Therefore, in order that a criminal should be absolved—a vicarious satisfaction being rendered by another hand—it is necessary that there should intervene a sovereign act of the supreme lawgiver, which, with respect to the law, is called relaxation, and with respect to the debtor is called remission, because the personal endurance of the penalty is remitted, and a vicarious endurance of it is accepted in its stead. Hence it clearly appears that in this work [of redemption] remission and satisfaction are perfectly consistent with each other, because there is satisfaction in the endurance of the punishment which Christ bore, and there is remission in the acceptance of a vicarious victim. The satisfaction respects Christ, from whom God demanded the very same punishment, as to kind of punishment, though not as to the degree nor as to the nature of the sufferings which the law denounced upon us. The remission respects believers, to whom God remits the personal, while he admits the vicarious, punishment. And thus appears the admirable reconciliation of justice and mercy—justice which executes itself upon the sin, and mercy which is exercised toward the sinner. Satisfaction is rendered to the justice of God by the sponsor, and remission is granted to us by God.' *

“Hence, pecuniary satisfaction differs from penal, thus: (a) In debt, the demand terminates upon the thing due. In crime, the legal demand for punishment is upon the person of the criminal. (b) In debt, the demand is for the precise thing due—the exact *quid pro quo*, and nothing else. In crime, the demand is for that kind, degree, and duration of suffering which the

* Turretin, locus xiv, quæstio 10, §.

law—that is, absolute and omniscient justice—demands in each specific case, the person suffering and the sin to be expiated both being considered. (c) In debt, the payment of the thing due, by whomsoever it may be made, *ipso facto* liberates the debtor, and instantly extinguishes all the claims of the creditor, and his release of the debtor is no matter of grace. In crime, a vicarious suffering of the penalty is *admissible* only at the absolute discretion of the sovereign; remission is a matter of grace; the rights acquired by the vicarious endurance of penalty all accrue to the sponsor; and the *claims of law* upon the sinner are not *ipso facto* dissolved by such a satisfaction, but remission accrues to the designed beneficiaries only at such times and on such conditions as have been determined by the will of the sovereign or agreed upon between the sovereign and the sponsor.

“*The significance of the term penalty, and the distinction between calamities, chastisements, and penal evils.* Calamities are sufferings viewed without reference to any design or purpose in their infliction, that is, suffering considered simply as suffering. Chastisements are sufferings viewed as designed for the improvement of those who experience them. When viewed as designed to satisfy the claims of justice and law they are penal evils. The sufferings of Christ were not mere objectless, characterless calamities. They could not have been chastisements designed for his personal improvement. They must therefore have been penal inflictions vicariously endured.*

“Penalty is suffering exacted by the supreme lawmaking power of the breakers of law. The penalty in case of any person and in view of any crime is precisely that kind, degree, and duration of suffering which the supreme lawmaking power demands of *that person* under those conditions for that crime. Human law is necessarily generalized in an average adaptation to

* Dr. Charles Hodge.

classes. But divine law, with infinite accuracy, adapts itself to the absolute rights of each individual case of crime and punishment, the penalty in each case fulfilling all righteousness, both as respects the person punished and the crime for which it is inflicted. We say that Christ suffered the very penalty of the law, not because he suffered in the least the same kind, much less the same degree of suffering as was penally due those for whom he acted, because that is not at all necessary to the idea of penalty. But we say that he suffered the very penalty of the law, because he suffered in our stead; our sins were punished in strict rigor of justice in him; the penal demands of the law upon his people were extinguished, because his sufferings sustained precisely the same legal relations that our sufferings in person would have done; and because he suffered precisely that kind, degree, and duration of suffering that absolute justice demanded of his divine person, when found federally responsible for the guilt of all the sins of the elect. We believe that while the sufferer is substituted the penalty, as *penalty*, though never as suffering, is identical. We are willing to call it in accommodation a 'substituted penalty,' though we believe the phrase inaccurate. But the phrase insisted upon by the advocates of the governmental atonement theory, namely, 'a substitute for a penalty,' we believe to be absurd. Sin is either punished or not punished. The penalty is either executed or remitted. Justice is either exercised or relaxed. There can be no manifestation of penal righteousness without an exercise of penal justice.

"*The meaning of the words substitution and vicarious.* These terms are admitted in a loose sense even by Socinians, and are paraded by Young, Maurice, and Jowett, and very much in the same loose, indifferent sense by Barnes and the advocates of the governmental atonement theory generally. When these parties say that Christ was substituted for us, and his sufferings are

vicarious, they mean nothing more than that he suffered in our behalf for our benefit. We hold, on the other hand, that Christ was in a strict and exact sense the substitute of his people; that is, by divine appointment and of his own free will he assumed all our legal responsibilities and thus assumed our law place, binding himself to do in our stead all that the law demanded of him when he suffered the penalty due us and rendered the obedience upon which our well-being was made to depend. *Vicarious* sufferings and obedience are penal inflictions, and acts of obedience to law which are rendered in our place or stead [*vice*] as well as in our behalf by our substitute. An alien goes to the army in the place of a drafted subject. He is the substitute of the man in whose place he goes. His labors, his dangers, his wounds, and his death are vicarious.

“*The distinction between the terms expiation and propitiation.* Both these words represent the same Greek word, *ἱλάσκεσθαι*. When construed, as it is constantly in the classics, with *τὸν Θεόν* or *τοὺς Θεούς*, it means to propitiate by sacrificial expiation. In the New Testament it is construed with *τὰς ἀμαρτίας* (Heb. ii, 17), and is properly translated *to expiate*. Expiation removes the *reatus* or *guilt* of sin. *Reatus* is that obligation to suffer the penalty which is inherent in sin. Sanctification alone removes the pollution of sin. Propitiation removes the *judicial* displeasure of God. Expiation respects the bearing or effect which satisfaction has upon sin or upon the sinner. Propitiation has respect to the bearing or effect which satisfaction has upon God. Sacrificial expiation among heathens, Jews, and Christians has always been regarded as a true *pœna vicaria*; it is of the genus penalty; its specific difference is vicariousness. Propitiation, as a theological term, means that peculiar method of rendering placable which affects the heart of a Deity, who at the same time hates the sin and is determined to punish it, yet loves the sinner; and which proceeds by means of expiation,

or the vicarious suffering of the penalty by a substituted victim.

“ *Impetration and Application.* Arminians and the Calvinistic advocates of a general atonement are constantly insisting upon the distinction between the impetration and the application of salvation by Christ. By impetration they mean the purchase, or meritorious procurement by sacrifice, of all of those objective conditions of salvation which are offered to all men in the Gospel; that is, salvation made available on the condition of faith. By application they mean the actual application of that salvation to individuals upon faith. The impetration they hold to be general and indefinite; the application they believe to be personal, definite, and limited to believers. The Reformed Churches, on the other hand, teach that while the impetration of salvation is both logically and chronologically distinguishable from its application, nevertheless in the eternal and immutable design of God the impetration is personal and definite, and includes certainly and meritoriously the subsequent application to the persons intended; for ‘*to all for whom Christ hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same.*’

“ *Redemption and Atonement.* The modern advocates of a general atonement distinguish between the words redemption and atonement after this manner: Atonement they confine to the impetration of the objective conditions of salvation, which they maintain is general and indefinite. Redemption they use in a wider sense as including the actual personal application in addition to the general and all-sufficient impetration. Hence, while they speak of a general atonement, they deny, of course, that there is a general redemption. It must be carefully noted, however, that this distinction was not marked by this usage of the terms atonement and redemption by any of the controversialists on either side of the question during the seventeenth cen-

tury, when the authoritative standards of the Reformed Churches were written. Baxter used the word redemption as equivalent to atonement in his work entitled *Universal Redemption of Mankind by the Lord Jesus Christ*. So also the Arminian Dr. Isaac Barrow, in his sermons entitled '*The Doctrine of Universal Redemption Asserted and Explained*.' In the Westminster Confession, let it be remembered, the word redemption is used in the sense of atonement, or the sacrificial purchase of salvation for those for whom it was intended.*

"There is, however, unquestionably a distinction to be carefully observed between these words in their biblical usage.

"The precise biblical sense of atonement (כפרים—*ἱλασμός*) is the expiation of sin by means of a *pœna vicaria* in order to the propitiation of God. The biblical usage with respect to redemption (*ἀπολύτρωσις*, etc.), is more comprehensive and less definite. It signifies deliverance from loss or from ruin by the payment for us of a ransom by our Substitute. Hence it may signify the act of our Substitute in paying that ransom. Or it may be used to express the completed deliverance itself, the consummation of which is, of course, future. To say that 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us' (Gal. iii, 13), is precisely equivalent to saying that he has made atonement for us. But when we speak of our 'redemption drawing nigh' (Luke xxi, 28), of 'the redemption of the purchased possession' (Eph. i, 14), of 'the redemption of our body' (Rom. viii, 23), or of 'the day of redemption' (Eph. iv, 30), it is plain that the word signifies the deliverance of our souls and bodies, and the attainment for us of a heavenly inheritance by means of the payment of a ransom for us by our Lord—a deliverance which, although commenced now, will be consummated at a future day. Redemption being

* See Dr. Cunningham's *Historical Theology*, vol. ii, p. 327, and Dr. Henry B. Smith, in his edition of *Hagenbach*, vol. ii, pp. 356.

deliverance by means of the substitution of a ransom, it follows that, although the ransom can only be paid to God, and to him only as the moral Governor of the universe, we may still be said to be redeemed from all that we are delivered from by means of the ransom paid in the sacrifice of Christ. Thus we are said to be redeemed from our "vain conversation" (1 Pet. i, 18), "from death" (Hos. xiii, 14), "from the devil" (Col. ii, 15; Heb. ii, 14), from "all iniquity" (Tit. ii, 14), and "from the curse of the law" (Gal. iii, 13, and iv, 5), while it is of course not meant that the ransom is paid to the devil, or to sin, or to death, or to the law. It is simply absurd to claim that these different representations are inconsistent. A captive is redeemed by a price paid only to him that holds him in bondage, but by the same act may be redeemed from labor, from disease, from death, from the persecution of his fellow-captives, and from a slavish disposition.*

Meritum and Satisfactio. Thomas Aquinas (1274) first signalized the distinction between the terms *meritum* and *satisfactio*. By *satisfactio* he intended the bearing of Christ's work considered as penal suffering, which satisfies the penal claims of law for the demerit of sin. By *meritum* he intended the bearing of Christ's work considered as a holy obedience, fulfilling all the conditions of the original covenant of life upon which the eternal well-being of his people were suspended. These are in modern times both embraced under the one term satisfaction (which see above), and the distinction intended by Aquinas is now expressed by the terms *active* and *passive* obedience. The whole earthly career of Christ, including his death, was obedience in one aspect and suffering in another. Inasmuch as it was suffering, it expiated the sins of his people; inasmuch as it was obedience, it merited for them the covenanted reward of eternal life.

* See the closing paragraph of chap. xii, *Governmental Theory*.

What is our doctrine of atonement? The answer to this question is not so simple or unperplexed as many, at first thought, would suppose. The Scripture terms of atonement have, with all propriety, been in the freest use with us. Nor have we been careful to shun the terminology of the strictest doctrine of satisfaction. An inquiry for the ideas associated with these terms in the popular thought of Methodism respecting the nature of the atonement would probably bring no very definite answer. In view of all the facts we are constrained to think that the dominant idea has been that of a real and necessary atonement in Christ, while the idea of its nature has been rather indefinite. We are very sure that while the popular faith of Methodism has utterly excluded the Socinian scheme it has not been at one with the theory of satisfaction.

Our earlier written soteriology has, at least in part, a like indefiniteness. It is always clear and pronounced on the fact of an atonement, but not always exact or definite respecting its nature. This, however, should be noted, that our written soteriology contains comparatively but little directly on this question. Indeed, we have not contributed much to the literature of the atonement; and most of the little contributed has been given to the two questions of reality and extent, while only the smaller part has been given to the nature or doctrine of the atonement.

Mr. Watson has written more fully and formally on the atonement than any other Methodist author.* We recognize his superior ability as a theologian. This ability is not wanting in his discussion of the atonement. But his strength is given to the questions of its reality and extent. His discussion is mainly a polemic with the Socinian scheme and with Calvinistic limitationists. With rare ability he maintains the fact of an atonement against the one, and its universality against the

* *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, chapters xix-xxix.

others. But on the question of theories we cannot accord to him any very fair discrimination. Grotius, as it appears, was his chief authority, and next to him, Stillingfleet, who wrote mainly in defense of Grotius.* But Grotius, while giving the principles of a new theory, did not, as previously noted, give to its construction scientific completeness. He wrote from the standpoint of the reformed doctrine, but with such new principles as really constitute another doctrine. But, clear and determining as his principles are, he failed to give either theory in scientific completeness. This is just what Mr. Watson has failed to do. And he is less definite than Grotius himself.

He rejects the doctrine of satisfaction in its usual exposition, and requires for its acceptance such modifications as it cannot admit. He interprets satisfaction much in the manner of Grotius, and hence in a sense which the reformed doctrine must reject. And the doctrine which he arraigns and refutes as the Antinomian atonement is the historic and current Calvinian doctrine of satisfaction, with the formal rejection of its Antinomian sequences. He is, therefore, not a satisfactionist.†

The principles of moral government in which Mr. Watson grounds the necessity for an atonement mainly determine for him the governmental theory.‡ The same is true of his discussion of the *vinculum* between the sufferings of Christ and the forgiveness of sin.§ And when we add his broader views in soteriology as including the universality of the atonement, its strictly provisory character, and the real conditionality of its saving grace—views necessarily belonging to all consistent Arminian theology, and which Mr. Watson so fully maintained—his principles require for him the governmental theory of atonement. And the more certainly is this so, as it is impos-

* *Works*, vol. iii, p. 227.

† *Theological Institutes*, vol. ii, pp. 138-143.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 87-102.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 143-145.

sible to construct any new doctrine of a real atonement between this and the satisfaction theory.

So far as we know Dr. Whedon has never given his theory of atonement in the style of the governmental; yet it is in principle the same. In his statement of the doctrines of Methodism it is given thus: "Christ as truly died as a substitute for the sinner as Damon could have died as a substitute for Pythias. Yet to make the parallel complete Damon should so die for Pythias as that, unless Pythias should accept the substitution of Damon in all its conditions, he should not receive its benefits, and Damon's death should be for him in vain; Pythias may be as rightfully executed as if Damon had not died. If the sinner accept not the atonement, but deny the Lord that bought him, Christ has died for him in vain; he perishes for whom Christ died. If the whole human race were to reject the atonement, the atonement would be a demonstration of the righteousness and goodness of God, but would be productive of aggravation of human guilt rather than of salvation from it. The imputation of the sin of man, or his punishment, to Christ, is but a popular conception, justifiable, if understood as only conceptual; just as we might say that Damon was *punished* instead of Pythias. In strictness of language and thought neither crime, guilt, nor punishment is personally transferable."*

Anyone at all familiar with theories of atonement will see at a glance that the principles contained in this statement are thoroughly exclusive of the satisfaction theory, and that they have a true scientific position only with the rectoral theory. The same is true of the doctrine, and with much fuller unfolding, in the sermon to which reference is given.

On the theory of atonement we understand Dr. Raymond to be with Dr. Whedon. He gives the atonement thus: "The

**Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. xix, pp. 260, 261. Dr. Whedon gives the same views in his very able sermon on "Substitutional Atonement."

death of Christ is not a substituted penalty, but a substitute for a penalty. The necessity of an atonement is not found in the fact that the justice of God requires an invariable execution of deserved penalty, but in the fact that the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of his creatures, require that his essential and rectoral righteousness be adequately declared. The death of Christ is exponential of divine justice, and is a satisfaction in that sense, and not in the sense that it is, as of a debt, the full and complete payment of all its demands."*

The principles given in this passage exclude the satisfaction atonement, and require as their only scientific position the rectoral theory. All this is even more apparent when the passage cited is interpreted in the light of the further references given.

With this view Dr. Raymond's doctrine of justification, as that of every consistent Arminian, fully accords. It is not a discharge of the sinner through the merited punishment of his sin in his substitute, but an actual forgiveness, and such as can issue only in the nonexecution of penalty.†

We would not place Dr. Raymond in any false light, nor identify him with any theory which he discards. He does discard the theory which represents the death of Christ simply as a governmental display, and especially as implying that this is only one of several possible expedients in atonement. While fully maintaining the rectoral office of the atonement he regards the death of Christ as also a manifestation of the righteousness of God.‡ But these two facts we think very closely, indeed inseparably, united. Without the manifestation of the divine righteousness the atonement in the death of Christ could not fulfill its rectoral office. But it is not the governmental theory, in any true statement of it, that is here criticised.

* *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 257, 258. See also pp. 261, 264-268.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 258.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 253.

And on its own principles the theory requires the redemptive mediation of Christ as the only adequate atonement.

The principles and office of the atonement in Christ, as maintained by Dr. Bledsoe, agree with the governmental theory. This will be clear to anyone who will read with scientific discrimination his discussion of the question.* And with Arminians he is, rightfully, a representative author on questions of this kind. He had both the learning and the ability for the discussion of Methodist doctrines. He gave to them profound study, and had a deep insight into their philosophy. The same is true respecting the atonement. He studied it in the light of the Scriptures and in its scientific relations to other cardinal doctrines of Wesleyan Arminianism. The outcome is a doctrine intrinsically the same as we propound, though not so styled. On the ground of such a doctrine it is easy to answer the Socinian objections arrayed against the fact of an atonement in the death of Christ; objections which the theory of satisfaction never has answered, and never can.

The soteriology of Wesleyan Arminianism, taken as a whole, excludes the satisfaction theory, and requires the governmental as the only theory consistent with its doctrines. The doctrines of soteriology, with the atonement included, must admit of systemization, and be in scientific accord. If not, there is error at some point, as no truth can be in discord with any other truth.† Now certain cardinal doctrines of the Wesleyan soteriology are very conspicuous and entirely settled. One is, that the atonement is only provisory in its character; that it renders men salvable, but does not necessarily save them. Another, and the consequence of the former, is the conditionality of salvation. Nor is this such as Calvinism often asserts, yet holds with the monergism of the system, but a real conditionality in accord with the synergism of the truest Arminianism.

* *Theodicy*, pp. 276-293.

† *Governmental Theory*, chap. i, 10.

On these facts there is neither hesitation nor divergence in Methodism. With these facts, the atonement of satisfaction must be excluded from her system of doctrines, and the recto-ral theory maintained as the only doctrine of a real atonement agreeing with them.

Such has really been the position of Arminianism from the beginning, though without exact or definite statement. It never occupied the position of Lutheranism in maintaining a doctrine of atonement which, with its universality, must save all men, and which is disproved by the fact that many are not saved. While the early Arminians never formally constructed a doctrine of atonement in scientific accord with their system, yet from the beginning they denied the leading facts of the reformed soteriology so vitally connected with the atonement of satisfaction. Thus they denied its limitation to an elect part, that it is necessarily saving, that it includes its own application, that saving faith is a resistless product of its sovereign grace, that the application is in the full extent of the redemption.* Indeed, these questions were the chief issue in the great polemics between the Arminians and the Calvinists. Hence the former could not consistently hold the doctrine maintained by the latter.

But if we object to the idea that justice will accept of nothing but punishment—that the Infinite can in no case pardon—much more do we object to substitutional punishment, as discreditable to God, and impossible under a holy and just administration. What is punishment? Is it mere suffering inflicted, without respect to occasion or end? Certainly not. Just punishment, and it is of that alone that we speak, is suffering inflicted upon a culprit for the willful violation of a

* Dr. Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. i, pp. 516-518; Frederick Calder, *Memoirs of Episcopius*, p. 474; Professor Smeaton, *Apostles' Doctrine of Atonement*, pp. 537, 538.

law which he was obliged of right to obey. It has four invariable and essential conditions: First, that the law transgressed be a righteous law; that is, that it be not oppressive and that it enforce rights; second, that it has been knowingly and freely transgressed; third, that the party inflicting the punishment has the right obligation to inflict it; fourth and finally, that it be inflicted on the guilty. Any one of these wanting there may be suffering, but there cannot be just punishment. An innocent person may come into suffering either voluntarily, as a consequence of the guilty act of another, or voluntarily in the behalf of one who has committed crime. The innocent cannot be punished by justice. The proposition that the innocent may be justly punished contains as absolute a contradiction as can be uttered in language. It is impossible to think of just punishment without crime; and it is impossible to think of its being exerted upon any other than the culprit, but most impossible of all to think of going away from the culprit to find content in the infliction of its deadly blow upon the most exalted worth or most immaculate holiness in the universe. The case is not changed by alleging that it is a device of love—that justice punishes the one innocent for the sake of the many guilty. Both the love and the justice become stained with foulest injustice. Not such is either the love or justice of God. Those ineffable attributes, alike the glory of the divine nature, and alike and forever the terror of all sin, and the palladium of all innocence, were never more vilely slandered than in the vain dream of substitutional punishment.

But it is said the supposition is not that punishment was inflicted on the innocent. The substitute was punished because, in taking the law place of the guilty, he became guilty. Some have been bold enough to assert that Christ was guilty of all the sins of the whole world; others have been more

sparing, and have only indicted him for all the sins of the elect. What does this mean? The divine declaration is positive, that "in him was no sin;" that "He was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" that in heaven he is hailed and worshiped as the thrice holy; that "he, the just, died for the unjust." But it is said that he consented to be accounted a sinner, and that God did so account him; but if in fact he was not a sinner on what principle could he so account himself? How could God so account him? Will he, the perfectly true and just, falsely accuse himself? Will the Father falsely accuse him? Either supposition is to impute a sinful artifice to the Godhead, and so to rob the whole Deity of the attribute of holiness. Either he is a sinner or he is not. The Scriptures are plain, that he did no sin—that he was the spotless lamb. To assume that he was when God declares he was not is to make God a liar. To say that God accuses him is to put God at war with himself. It will not relieve the case to say that his sin was not his own, for it is a contradiction to say it was his sin, but not his own sin. It is no relief to say that it was so his sin, that he was treated as if it had been his own sin, for this is but another way of saying that infinite justice can treat an innocent person just as if he was guilty; that is that infinite justice might be infinite injustice at the same time that it made no distinction between guilt and innocence. Human language is incapable of a grosser absurdity.

There is but one way by which any being can be justly accused of sin, and justly punished for sin, and that only way is by sinning. To suppose that Christ in some way made human sin his sin necessitates that he accepted it, and thus made it, *de facto*, his own; but that supposition contradicts the declaration that "in him was no sin," and also makes it impossible that his punishment should be meritorious,

since it would be punishment which he deserved for his own sin.

But it is said, after all, the Scriptures declare that he was punished, and this settles the question. This we deny, and assert that they uniformly declare the very opposite. They declare that he was guiltless, and they declare that the law—justice—condemns only transgressors; that, therefore, the law could not condemn him. They declare positively that in him the Father was always well pleased; that when suffering his greatest agonies it was not because of displeasure against him that the Father loved him. We will go further, and say that not only were his sufferings not because of any displeasure of justice against him, but so neither were they because of the displeasure of God against any transgressor or class of transgressors; they do not express displeasure. They were sufferings of love and pity incurred, not as penal, but voluntarily accepted from simple inspiration of love.

But these are not the only grounds for rejecting the idea of *substitutional punishment* as a delusion and a snare; it must be rejected as wholly inadmissible and false on other grounds as well; on the general ground that it leads to a totally incorrect view of the nature and design of the atonement, and all the doctrines cognate thereto.

Is it not the all-pervading doctrine of the Scriptures that the atonement does not deliver us from exposedness to punishment for our sins; that, notwithstanding it has been made, we are still liable, and in case we do not repent will actually suffer the penalty? But how can this be if the penalty has already been endured? Will justice demand the forfeit the second time—have its pound of flesh of the surety and debtor both? The limited atonementist may and does answer that all those on behalf of whom it was offered will infallibly be saved, and the Universalist may consistently make the same

answer as of the whole, but how shall we escape? We hold that those on behalf of whom the atonement was offered may perish; that some of them certainly will. If the punishment was visited on the surety, how can we explain the second visitation? Either the first met the demand or it did not. If it did justice can neither ask nor receive the second indemnity. There can be no escape from this. It will not answer to reply that it was conditional. A penal atonement cannot be conditional.

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